SINKING JAPAN 2 天変地異

さいとう・プロ SAITO-PRO 作品

日本沈没

小松左京 原作

SPコミックス

Japan sinks

SINKING JAPAN 2

Japan sinks

Saito
Productions

Original story by
Sakyo Komatsu

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Japan sinks

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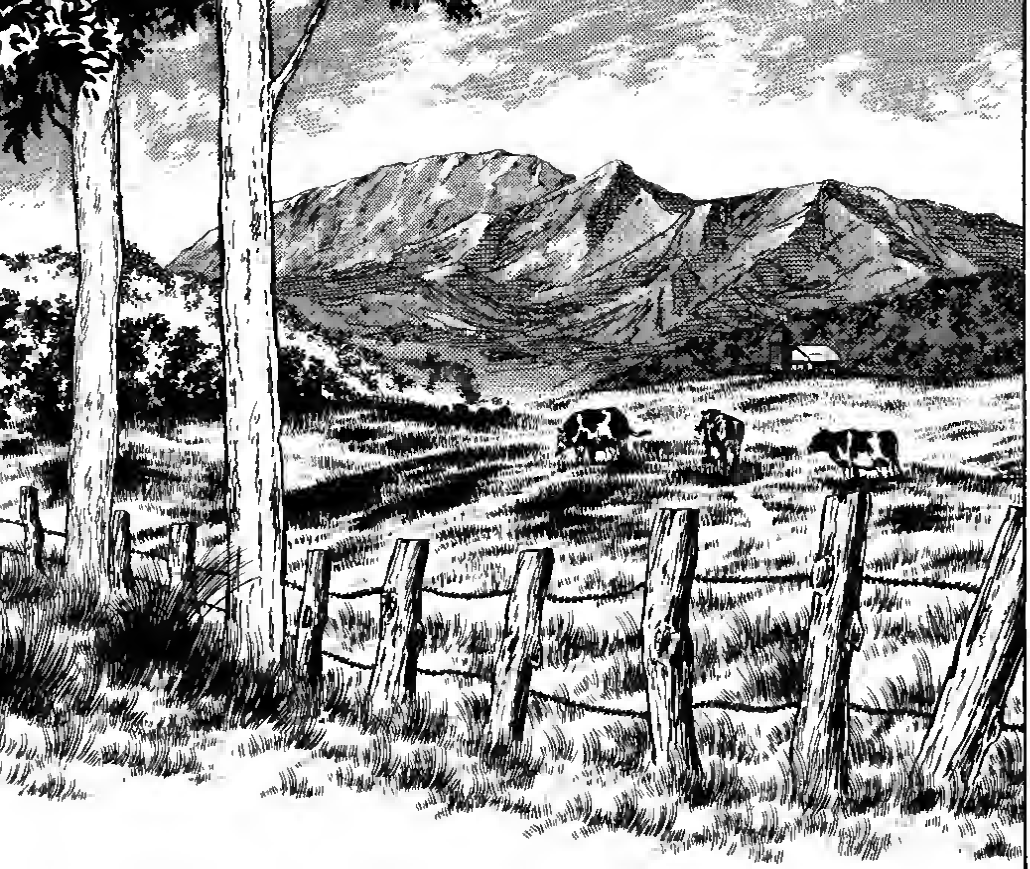
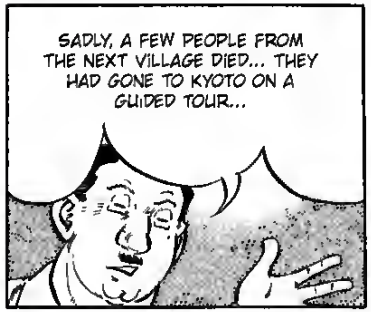
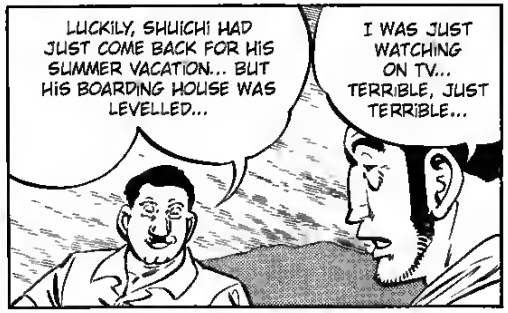
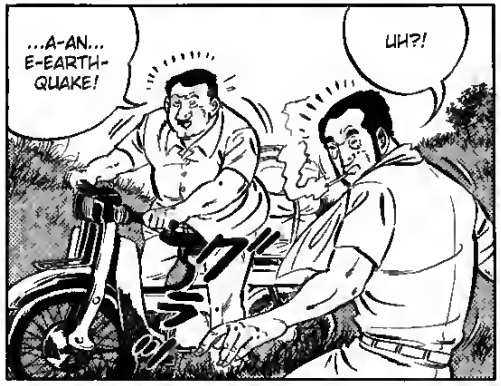


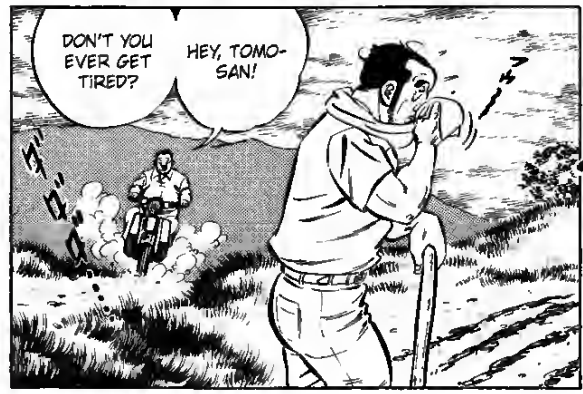
Chapter 3: Plan D.

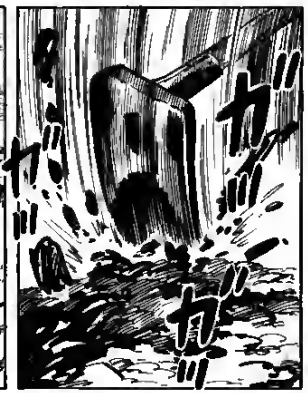

SADLY, A FEW PEOPLE FROM THE NEXT VILLAGE DIED... THEY HAD GONE TO KYOTO ON A GUIDED TOUR...


LUCKILY, SHUICHI HAD JUST COME BACK FOR HIS SUMMER VACATION... BUT HIS BOARDING HOUSE WAS LEVELLED...
I WAS JUST WATCHING ON TV... TERRIBLE, JUST TERRIBLE...

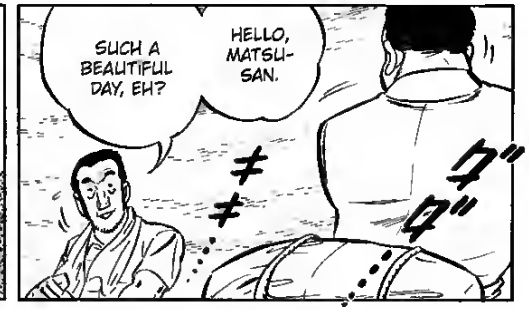

...A-AN... E-EARTH-QUAKE!
UH?!

NOBODY KNOWS WHAT DESTINY HAS IN STORE FOR THEM...
UHM...

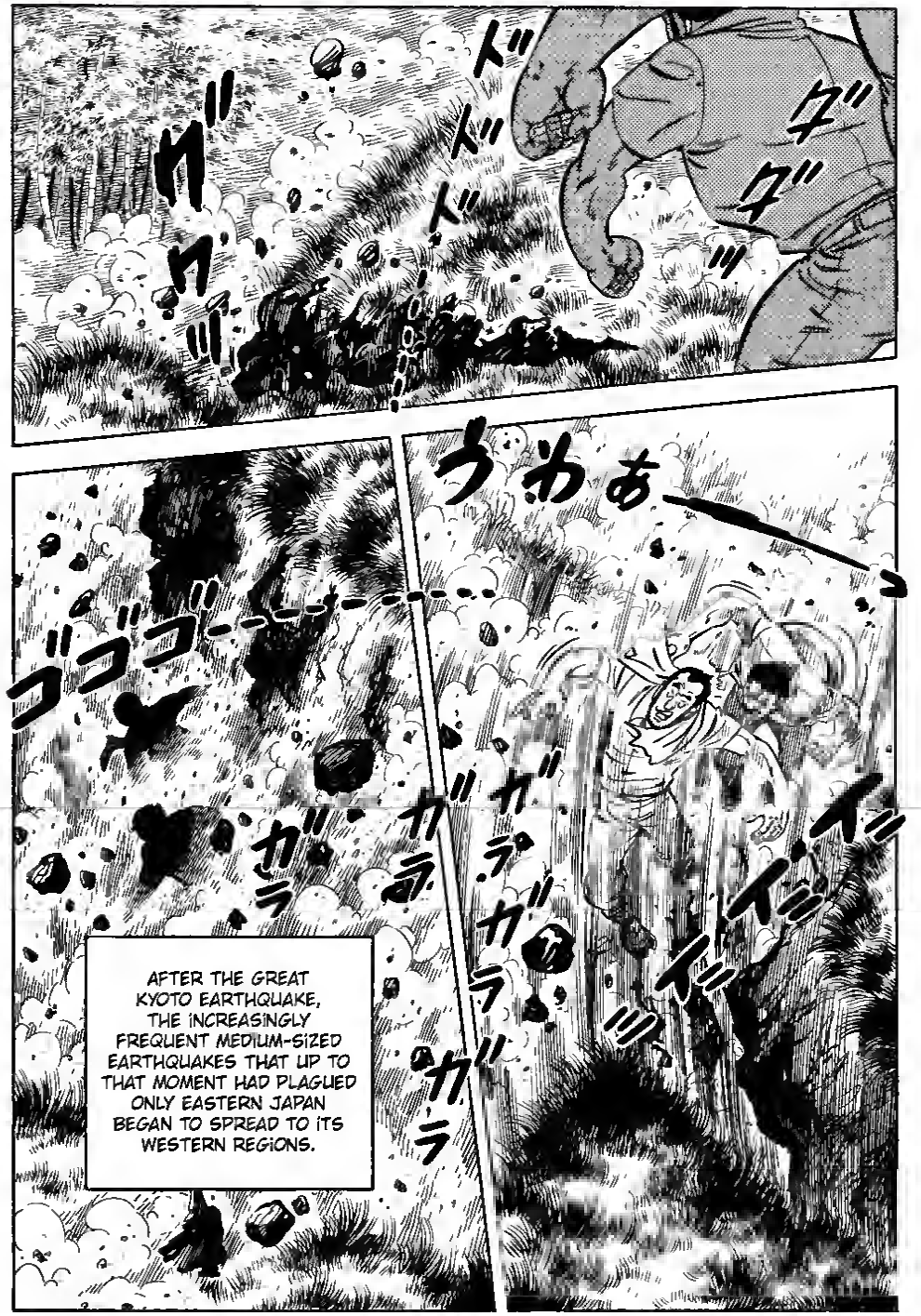

DON'T YOU EVER GET TIRED?
HEY, TOMO-SAN!



...WAS HE ALRIGHT, WITH THE EARTHQUAKE AND EVERYTHING?
BY THE WAY, I HEARD YOUR SHUICHI WAS STUDYING IN KYOTO...


SUCH A BEAUTIFUL DAY, EH?
HELLO, MATSU-SAN.

IT'S... IT'S A BIG ONE!
WAHHH!
LET'S RUN TO THE BAMBOO GROVE!
...THE BAMBOO GROVE!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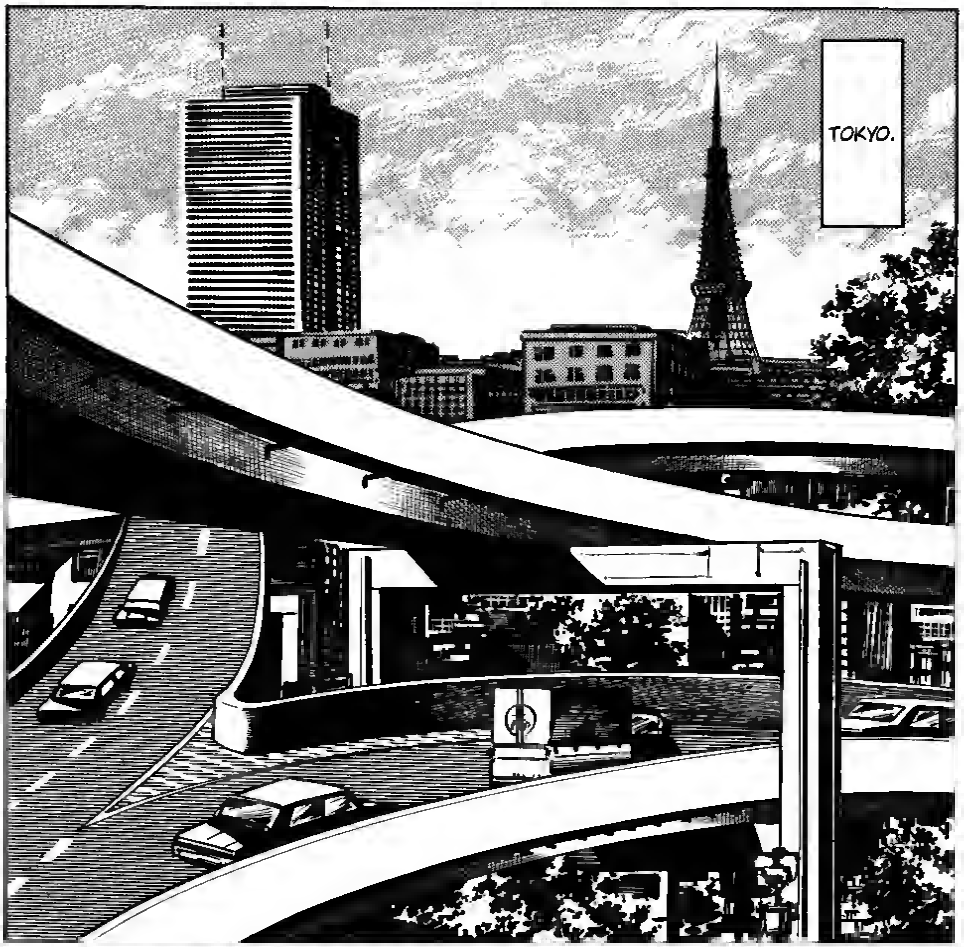
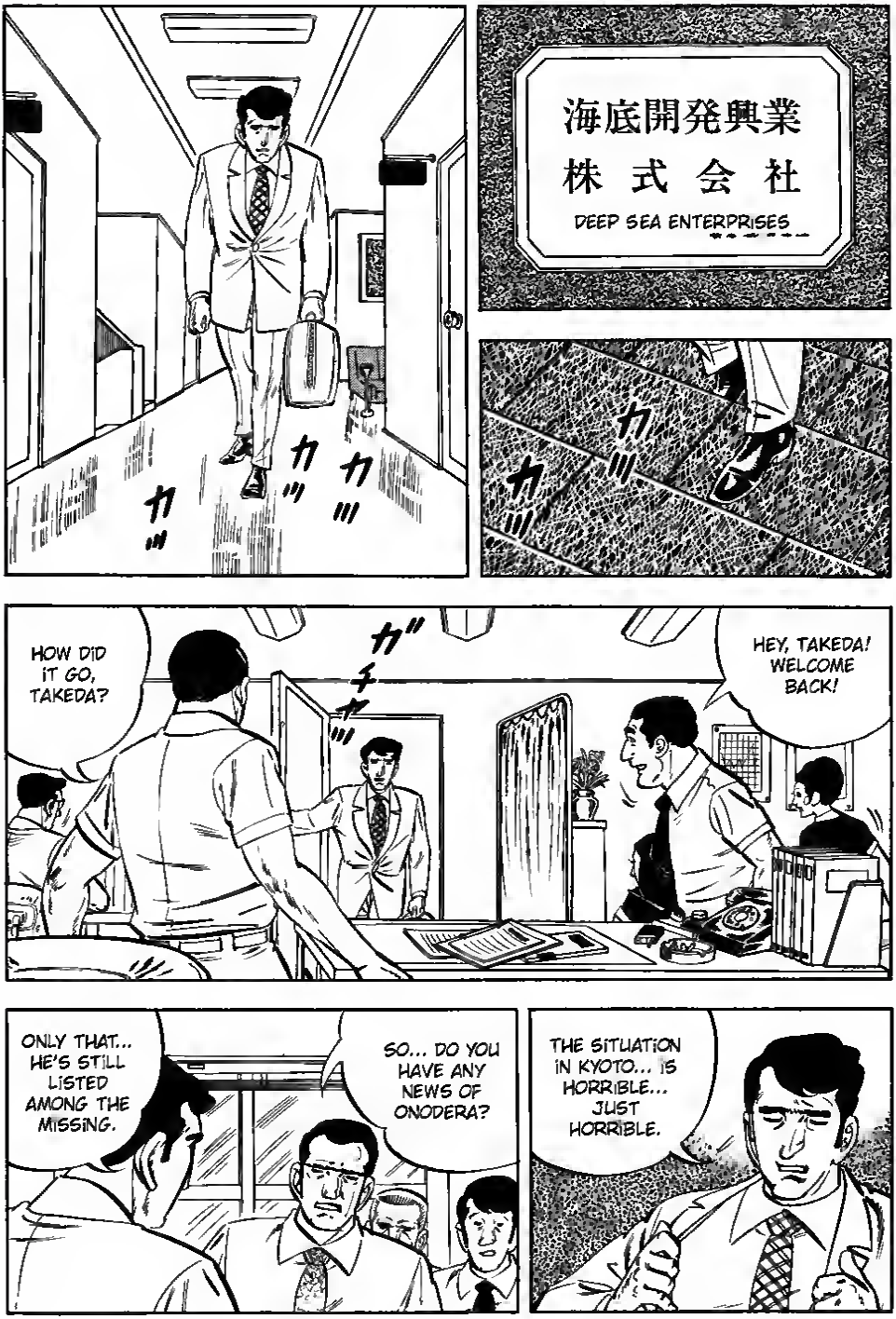
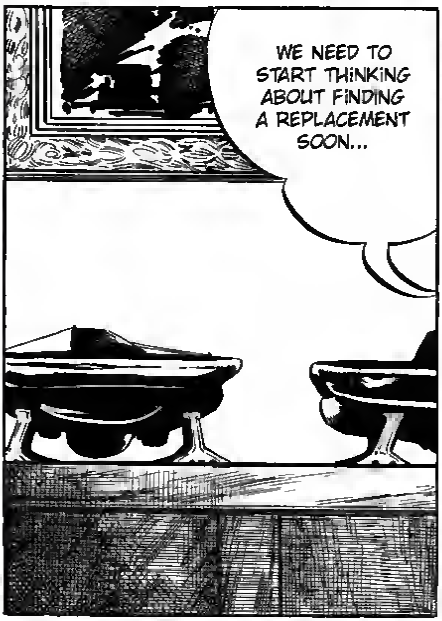

TOKYO.

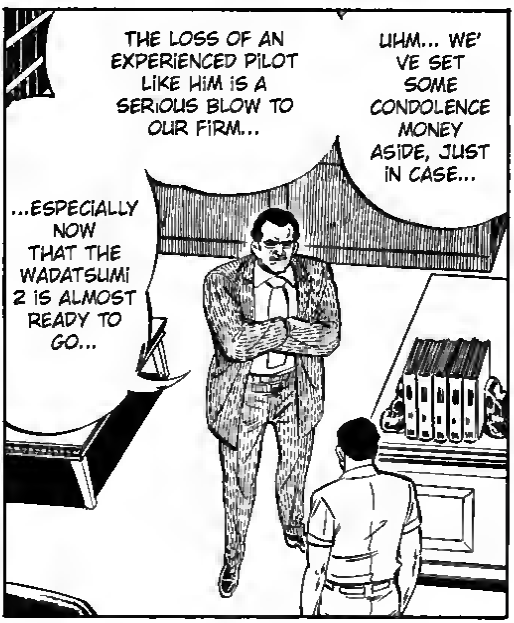

海底開発興業
株式会社
DEEP SEA ENTERPRISES
カツ カツ カツ
カツ カツ カツ
HOW DID IT GO, TAKEDA?
カチャ
HEY, TAKEDA! WELCOME BACK!
ONLY THAT... HE'S STILL LISTED AMONG THE MISSING.
SO... DO YOU HAVE ANY NEWS OF ONODERA?
THE SITUATION IN KYOTO... IS HORRIBLE... JUST HORRIBLE.

...POOR WOMAN, SHE SEEMED TO HAVE LOST ALL HOPE.
...HIS MOTHER SAID SHE HADN'T HEARD FROM HIM...
...I EVEN WENT TO HIS HOMETOWN, KOBE...
A HUGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARE STILL MISSING AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE, YOU SEE...
...I NEVER THOUGHT HE'D DIE IN SOMETHING AS ORDINARY AS AN EARTHQUAKE...
ONO-DERA...
MOST OF THE FRIENDS HE WAS WITH THAT NIGHT ARE CONFIRMED DEAD...
THANKS, TAKEDA... GOOD JOB.
社長室
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE
コーン
コーン
...
バタン

WE'VE HEARD NOTHING FROM HIM...
HE'S AMONG THE MISSING...

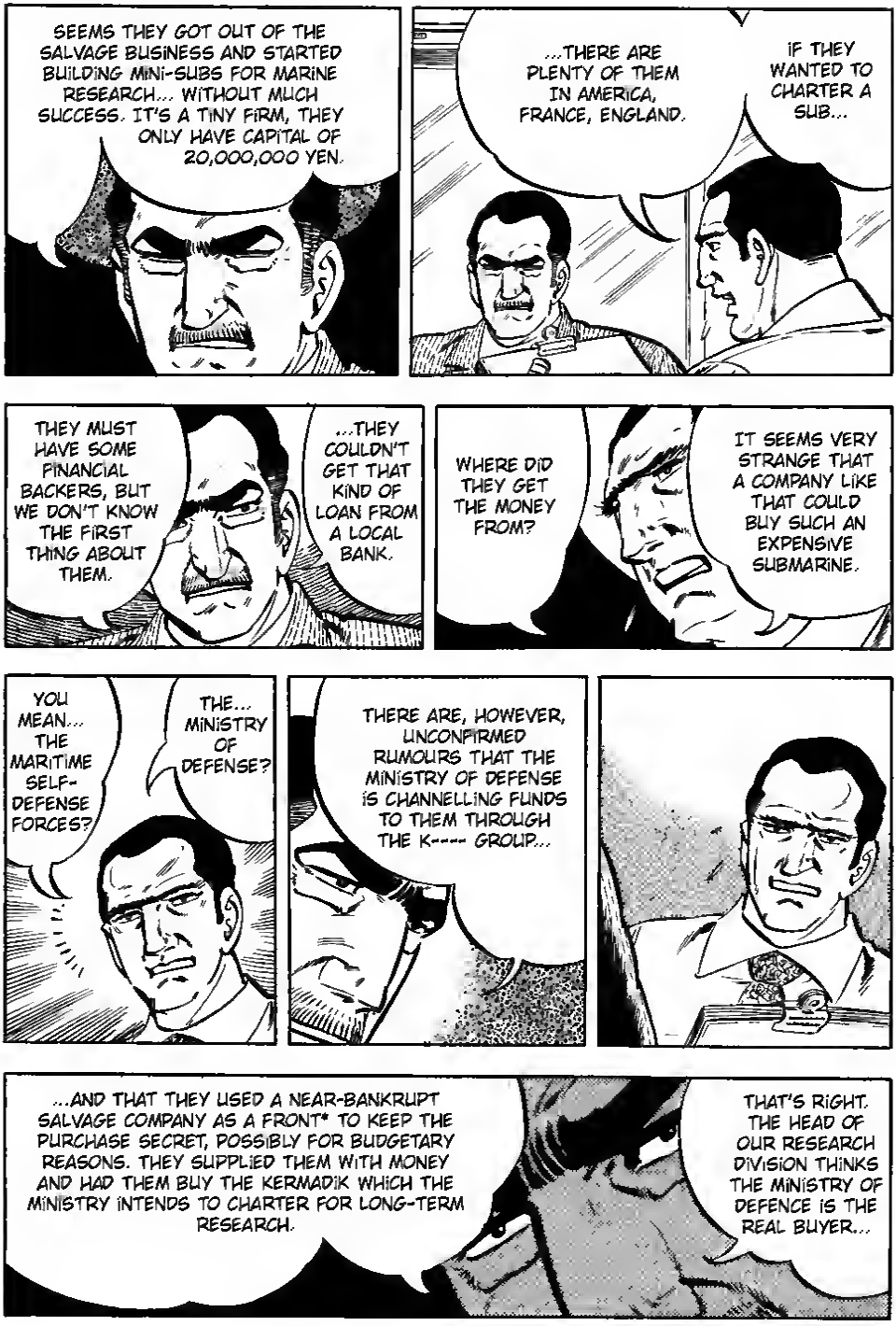
SO... DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT ONODERA?
バヴォーン


WE NEED TO START THINKING ABOUT FINDING A REPLACEMENT SOON...


THE LOSS OF AN EXPERIENCED PILOT LIKE HIM IS A SERIOUS BLOW TO OUR FIRM...
UHM... WE'VE SET SOME CONDOLENCE MONEY ASIDE, JUST IN CASE...
...ESPECIALLY NOW THAT THE WADATSUMI 2 IS ALMOST READY TO GO...

?
BY THE WAY, I'VE JUST RECEIVED THIS REPORT FROM THE FOREIGN DESK OF OUR RESEARCH DIVISION...
WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT, YOSHIMURA?
THAT'S THE STRANGE PART...
WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE COMPANY?
THAT'S WHAT IT SAYS...
THE KERMADIK, A FRENCH SUBMERSIBLE, HAS BEEN PURCHASED BY A JAPANESE SALVAGE COMPANY?
IS THIS TRUE?
WHY WOULD A COMPANY LIKE THAT BUY A SUBMARINE IN THE 10,000 M CLASS?
...THEY SEEM TO BE CONDUCTING VERY LITTLE BUSINESS, IF ANY AT ALL.
IT'S A SMALL OUTFIT BASED IN KOBE... THEY HAVEN'T GONE UNDER YET BUT...

* A FRONT COMPANY: A COMPANY SET UP BY AND CONTROLLED BY ANOTHER FIRM.

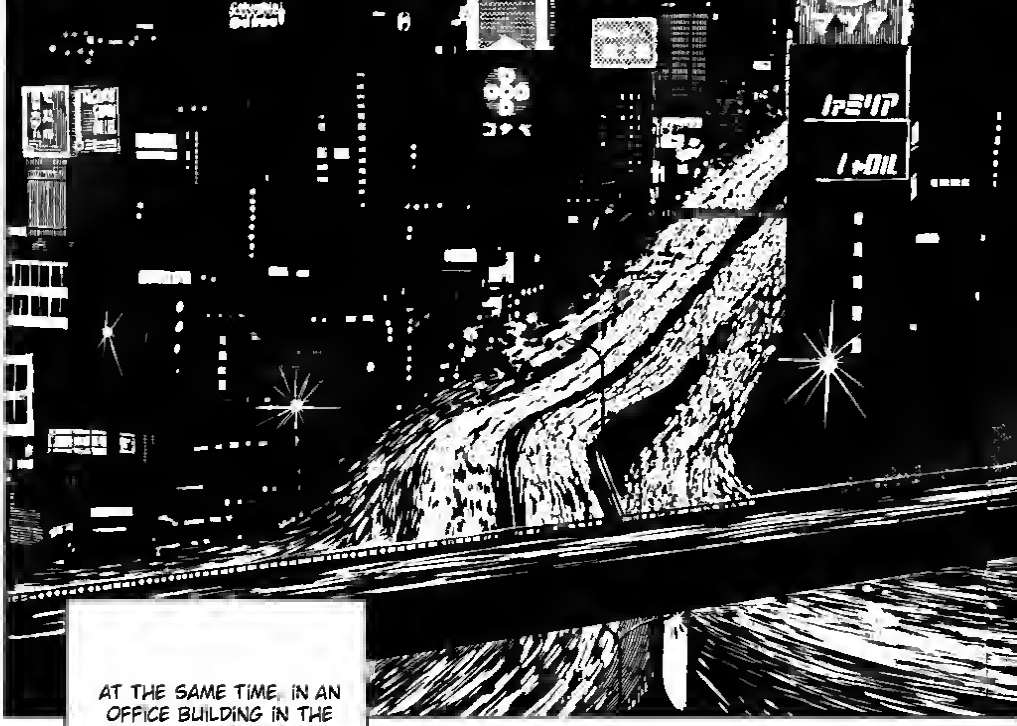

SEEMS THEY GOT OUT OF THE SALVAGE BUSINESS AND STARTED BUILDING MINI-SUBS FOR MARINE RESEARCH... WITHOUT MUCH SUCCESS. IT'S A TINY FIRM, THEY ONLY HAVE CAPITAL OF 20,000,000 YEN.
...THERE ARE PLENTY OF THEM IN AMERICA, FRANCE, ENGLAND.
IF THEY WANTED TO CHARTER A SUB...
THEY MUST HAVE SOME FINANCIAL BACKERS, BUT WE DON'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT THEM.
...THEY COULDN'T GET THAT KIND OF LOAN FROM A LOCAL BANK.
WHERE DID THEY GET THE MONEY FROM?
IT SEEMS VERY STRANGE THAT A COMPANY LIKE THAT COULD BUY SUCH AN EXPENSIVE SUBMARINE.
YOU MEAN... THE MARITIME SELF-DEFENSE FORCES?
THE... MINISTRY OF DEFENSE?
THERE ARE, HOWEVER, UNCONFIRMED RUMOURS THAT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE IS CHANNELLING FUNDS TO THEM THROUGH THE K---- GROUP...
...AND THAT THEY USED A NEAR-BANKRUPT SALVAGE COMPANY AS A FRONT* TO KEEP THE PURCHASE SECRET, POSSIBLY FOR BUDGETARY REASONS. THEY SUPPLIED THEM WITH MONEY AND HAD THEM BUY THE KERMADIK WHICH THE MINISTRY INTENDS TO CHARTER FOR LONG-TERM RESEARCH.
THAT'S RIGHT. THE HEAD OF OUR RESEARCH DIVISION THINKS THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE IS THE REAL BUYER...

WHAT SURVEY IS SO URGENT... THAT THEY CANNOT WAIT FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE WADATSUMI 2?
AND WHY WOULD THEY RESORT TO SUCH MACHINATIONS INSTEAD OF DIRECTLY CHARTERING A SHIP FROM A FOREIGN COUNTRY?
...WANT TO USE THE KERMATIC FOR?
I SEE... BUT WHAT WOULD THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE...
THAT'S WHAT WE DON'T KNOW.
WE COULD TRY ASKING THE MINISTRY DIRECTLY.
...NATIONAL SECURITY?
...AND WAS MADE TO UNDERSTAND THAT HE SHOULD NOT PURSUE THE MATTER FURTHER... FOR REASONS OF NATIONAL SECURITY.
... HE SOON CAME TO A DEAD END.
THE HEAD OF THE RESEARCH DIVISION DID JUST THAT BUT...
NO USE...
DAD!
...
...

WELL...
DO YOU HAVE ANY NEWS OF ONODERA, DAD?
TORU...?
I HAVE NO REASON TO THINK SO.
...TELL ME THE TRUTH, DAD... DO YOU REALLY THINK HE'S DEAD?
I DON'T BELIEVE FOR A MINUTE ONODERA IS DEAD!
NO! IT'S A LIE!
...THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT COULD'VE HAPPENED TO HIM...
BUT YOU MUST REALIZE, TORU... HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE DIED IN KYOTO DURING THE EARTHQUAKE...
IF ONODERA IS DEAD, WHY HAVEN'T THEY FOUND HIS BODY?
YOU TELL HIM, YOSHIMURA-SAN!

I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING....
DIRECTOR...
YOU MEAN... ONODERA COULD BE ALIVE?
WHAT...?
...HAD BEEN RECRUITED BY THAT FIRM WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT?
WHAT IF ONODERA...
...THEY WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH IT, UNLESS THEY HAD A PILOT WITH THE NECESSARY SKILL AND EXPERIENCE.
YES. YOU SEE... EVEN IF THEY BOUGHT THE KERMADIK....
WHAT IF... HE'D ALREADY LEFT THE COUNTRY...?
ACCORDING TO THIS REPORT, THE KERMADIK IS TO BE DELIVERED TO NAPLES, ITALY...

I WAS JUST... THINKING OUT LOUD...
...I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.
ONODERA...
ONEDERA IS NOT THAT KIND OF MAN!
... WITHOUT ASKING FOR MY PERMISSION. AND EVEN IF HE DID, HE WOULD HAVE LET US KNOW...
I DON'T THINK FOR A MINUTE ONODERA WOULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
YES...
...KNOWING WE'RE ALL WORRIED SICK ABOUT HIM...!
HE WOULD NEVER GO AND JOIN ANOTHER FIRM WITHOUT TELLING US...
...
...COULD WE RULE THAT OUT?
WHAT ABOUT... IF HE WAS ORDERED TO KEEP SILENT FOR... REASONS OF "NATIONAL SECURITY"?



AT THE SAME TIME, IN AN OFFICE BUILDING IN THE HARAJUKU DISTRICT, A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE HEADED BY PROFESSOR TADORO WAS HARD AT WORK ON A PROJECT CODENAMED... PLAN D.

PROFESSOR YUKINAGA, PRESENTLY ON AN EXTENDED LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM M----- UNIVERSITY.
PROFESSOR TADORO, THE MAN AT THE HELM OF PLAN D.
KUNIEDA, A SECRETARY IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE.
YAMAZAKI, FROM THE CABINET'S INTELLI-GENCE SECTION
NAKATA, ONE OF THE FOREMOST EXPERTS IN COMPUTER SCIENCES IN THE COUNTRY.
IT'S A VERY TRICKY GAME WE'RE PLAYING... LIKE TRYING TO GRAB HOLD OF A GHOST.
WHEN YOU SAY "OUTSIDE"... ARE WE TALKING DOMESTICALLY OR INTERNATIONALLY? THE CONSEQUENCES WOULD BE VERY DIFFERENT.
...TO WHAT LENGTHS ARE WE PREPARED TO GO TO KEEP THE DETAILS OF THIS OPERATION SECRET FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD.
AS I SEE IT, THE BASIC QUESTION IS...

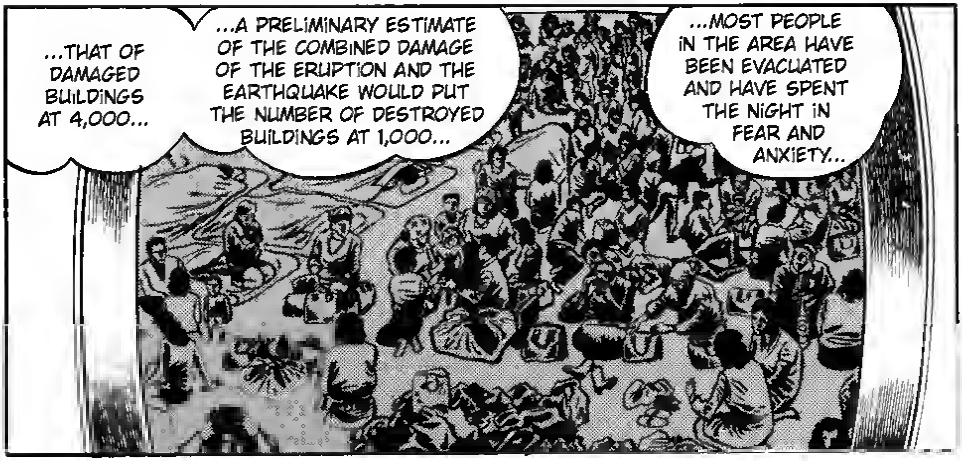
AS I UNDERSTAND THOUGH, THERE'S ONLY A ONE OR TWO PERCENT PROBABILITY OF... A WORST-CASE SCENARIO.
...SINCE THAT CONCLUSION COULD HAVE HUGE REPERCUSSIONS ON THE FUTURE OF JAPAN, WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO WORK IN THE SHADOWS.
IF WE COULD MAKE THE WORKINGS OF OUR GROUP PUBLIC, WE WOULD PROBABLY REACH A CONCLUSION FASTER BUT...
...FIRST, WHAT COULD HAPPEN? SECOND, WHEN COULD IT HAPPEN?
WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IS...
...CONSIDERING WHAT'S AT STAKE, EVEN A ONE PERCENT PROBABILITY IS WAY TOO HIGH.
YES, BUT...
...WE HAVE TO ASSUME A WORST-CASE SITUATION AND DO ALL WE CAN TO AVERT IT.
...AND SINCE, DEPENDING ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT COULD HAVE DISASTROUS EFFECTS ON JAPAN...
...AND TWO YEARS, AT THE EARLIEST.
ACCORDING TO MY ROUGH ESTIMATES IT COULD HAPPEN WITHIN... FIFTY YEARS, AT THE LATEST...

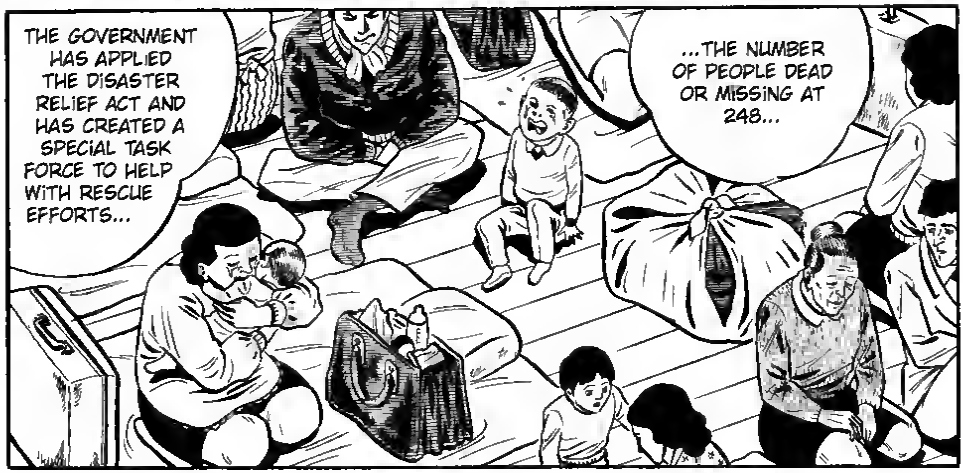
...I STILL NEED TO COLLECT A LOT MORE DATA AND GO OVER IT VERY CAREFULLY.
...IT'S HARD TO MAKE DETAILED PREDICTIONS AT THIS STAGE...
A WORST-CASE SITUATION... WHAT WOULD THAT IMPLY, PROFESSOR TADORO?
...WITHIN TWO YEARS AT THE EARLIEST, MOST OF THE JAPANESE ARCHIPELAGO COULD SINK UNDER THE SEA.
...AND IF I HAVEN'T GONE COMPLETELY BONKERS...
BUT, IF MY CALCULATIONS ARE CORRECT...
YES, YUKINAGA SPEAKING...
PROFESSOR TADORO! MT. ASO AND KIRISHIMA... HAVE JUST ERUPTED!
WHAT ?!

ドドド

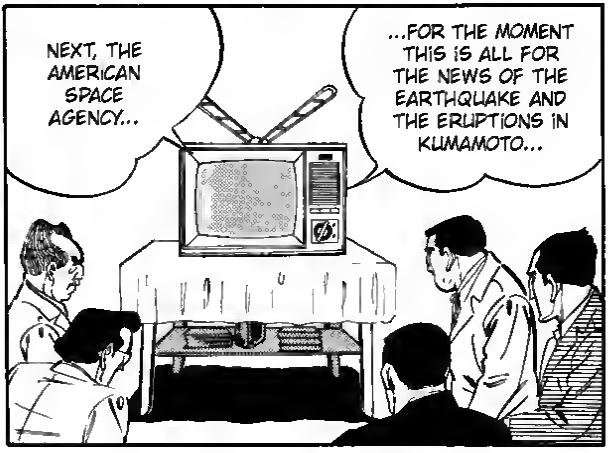
UNGHHH!
HELP!
ドドド

...IT DOESN'T LOOK AS IF THE MT. ASO AND KIRISHIMA'S ERUPTIONS WILL DIMINISH IN INTENSITY ANY TIME SOON...
KOYAMA

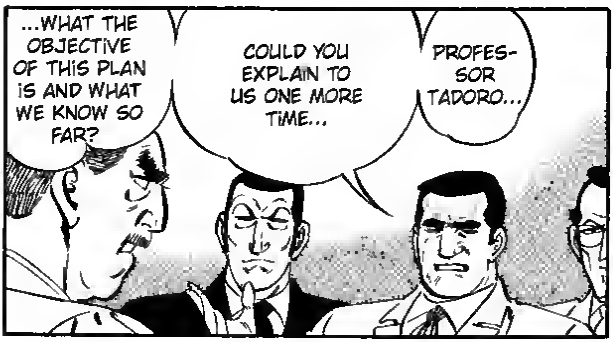

...THAT OF DAMAGED BUILDINGS AT 4,000...
...A PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF THE COMBINED DAMAGE OF THE ERUPTION AND THE EARTHQUAKE WOULD PUT THE NUMBER OF DESTROYED BUILDINGS AT 1,000...
...MOST PEOPLE IN THE AREA HAVE BEEN EVACUATED AND HAVE SPENT THE NIGHT IN FEAR AND ANXIETY...


THE GOVERNMENT HAS APPLIED THE DISASTER RELIEF ACT AND HAS CREATED A SPECIAL TASK FORCE TO HELP WITH RESCUE EFFORTS...
...THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE DEAD OR MISSING AT 248...

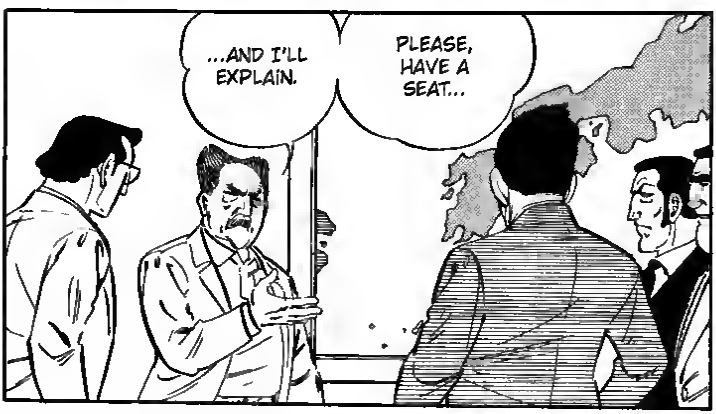
...

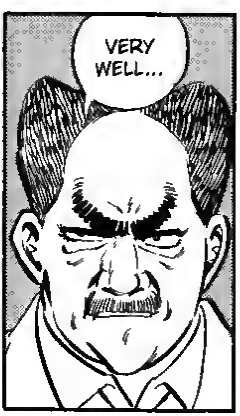

NEXT, THE AMERICAN SPACE AGENCY...
...FOR THE MOMENT THIS IS ALL FOR THE NEWS OF THE EARTHQUAKE AND THE ERUPTIONS IN KUMAMOTO...

...AND WITH THAT, THE WHOLE OF JAPAN IS SHAKING...
...SO NOW IT'S SPREAD TO KYUSHU...

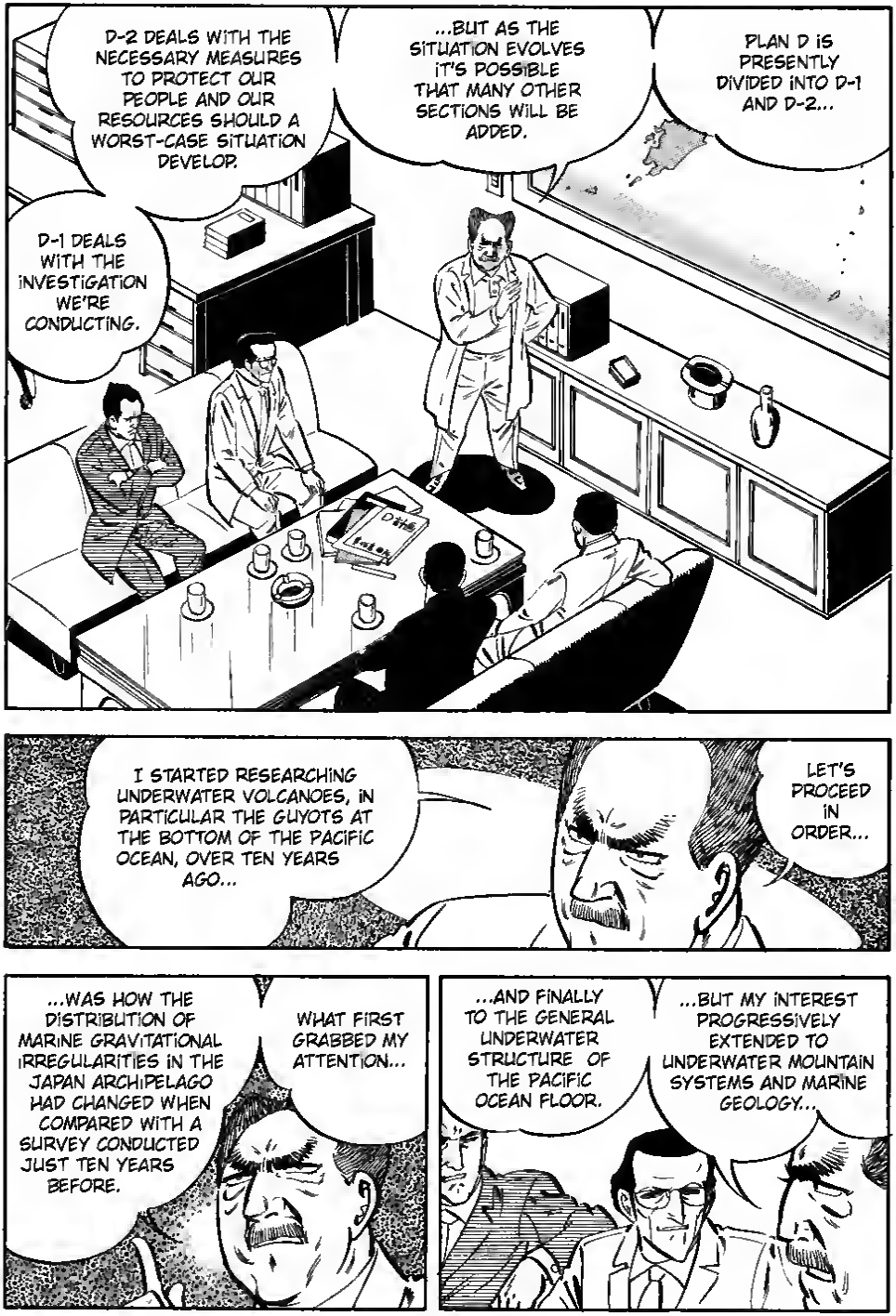

...WHAT THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS PLAN IS AND WHAT WE KNOW SO FAR?
COULD YOU EXPLAIN TO US ONE MORE TIME...
PROFES-SOR TADORO...

SCRAP
D計画
PLAN D
PROFESSOR TADORO
責任者 田所

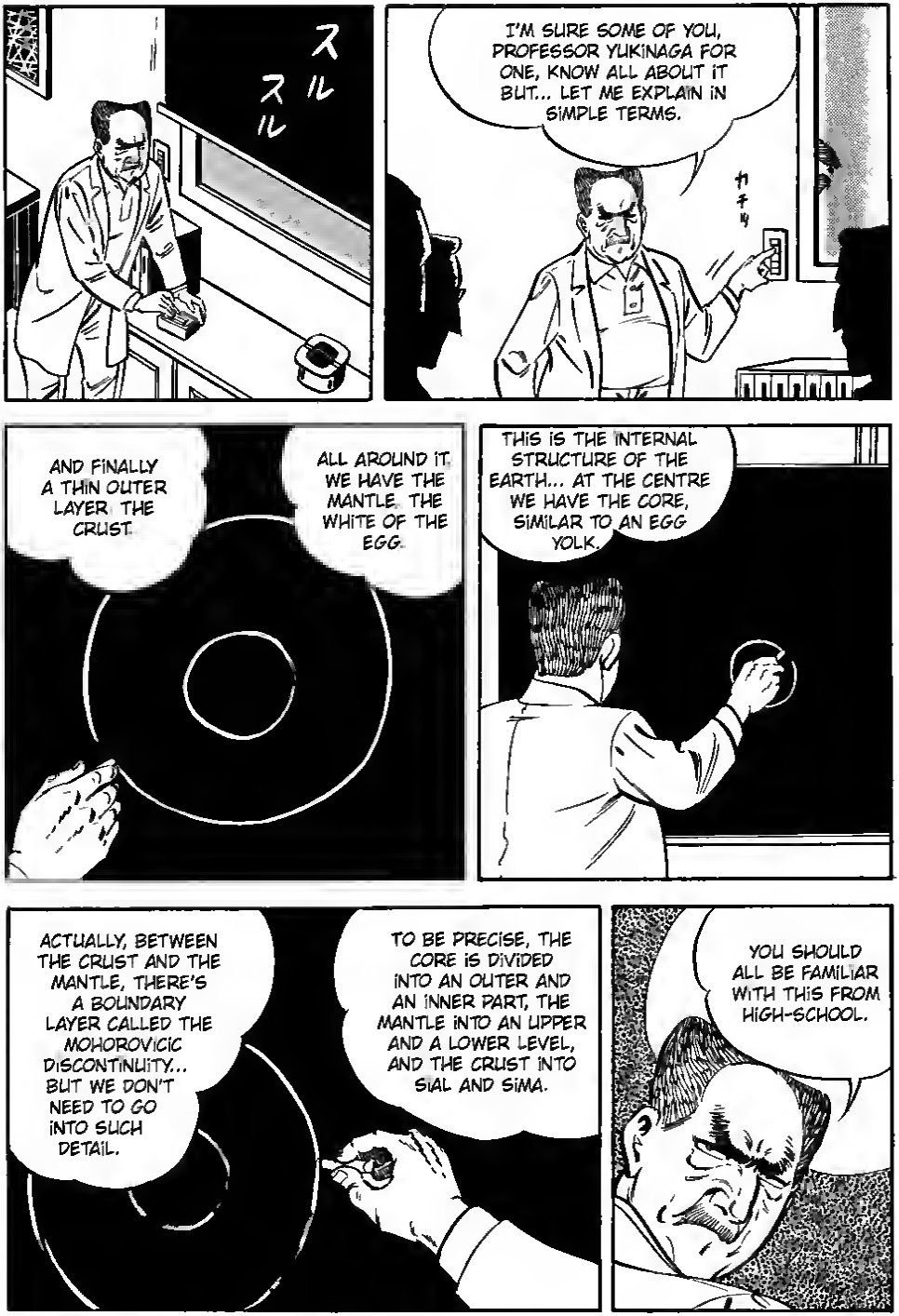

...AND I'LL EXPLAIN.
PLEASE, HAVE A SEAT...


VERY WELL...

...AS A RESULT OF MY INVESTIGATIONS AND RESEARCH IN MANY FIELDS. IT DEALS WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF A VAST ALTERATION OF THE GEOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO...
... HAS BEEN TAKING SHAPE IN MY HEAD...
PLAN D...


PLAN D IS PRESENTLY DIVIDED INTO D-1 AND D-2...
...BUT AS THE SITUATION EVOLVES IT'S POSSIBLE THAT MANY OTHER SECTIONS WILL BE ADDED.
D-2 DEALS WITH THE NECESSARY MEASURES TO PROTECT OUR PEOPLE AND OUR RESOURCES SHOULD A WORST-CASE SITUATION DEVELOP.
D-1 DEALS WITH THE INVESTIGATION WE'RE CONDUCTING.
LET'S PROCEED IN ORDER...
I STARTED RESEARCHING UNDERWATER VOLCANOES, IN PARTICULAR THE GUYOTS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN, OVER TEN YEARS AGO...
WHAT FIRST GRABBED MY ATTENTION...
...WAS HOW THE DISTRIBUTION OF MARINE GRAVITATIONAL IRREGULARITIES IN THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO HAD CHANGED WHEN COMPARED WITH A SURVEY CONDUCTED JUST TEN YEARS BEFORE.
...BUT MY INTEREST PROGRESSIVELY EXTENDED TO UNDERWATER MOUNTAIN SYSTEMS AND MARINE GEOLOGY...
...AND FINALLY TO THE GENERAL UNDERWATER STRUCTURE OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN FLOOR.

...AND THE AREA OF THE ABNORMALITIES HAS SHIFTED SEVERAL HUNDRED KILOMETRES TO THE EAST.
THE VARIATIONS RANGE FROM SEVERAL TENS OF MILLIGALS TO A HUNDRED MILLIGALS...
...A PERIOD OF ONLY TEN YEARS IS AWFULLY SHORT.
IN THE CASE OF GEOLOGICAL CHANGES, IN PARTICULAR ONES AFFECTING THE OUTER REGIONS OF THE MANTLE...
...AS FOR HEAT FLUXES, THE ALREADY LARGE GEOTHERMAL CURRENTS IN THE SEA OF JAPAN WERE GETTING EVEN BIGGER.
AT THE SAME TIME, THE PATTERN OF GEOMAGNETIC AND GEOELECTRICAL ABNORMALITIES SEEMED TO BE CHANGING TOO.
A TRULY EXTRAORDINARY EVENT!
...AN ISLAND SEVERAL TENS OF METRES ABOVE SEA LEVEL WAS SWALLOWED BY THE SEA IN THE BRIEF SPACE OF ONE NIGHT.
AND THEN... AN ISLAND IN THE OGASAWARA GROUP SUDDENLY VANISHED.
I GUESS I SHOULD...
...WOULD YOU MIND EXPLAINING?
..."MANTLE CONVECTION"?
...NAMELY THAT A RADICAL CHANGE SEEMED TO BE TAKING PLACE IN THE PATTERN OF MANTLE CONVECTION ALONG THE JAPAN TRENCH AREA...
AS I WAS INVESTIGATING THE MATTER, I NOTICED SOMETHING ELSE...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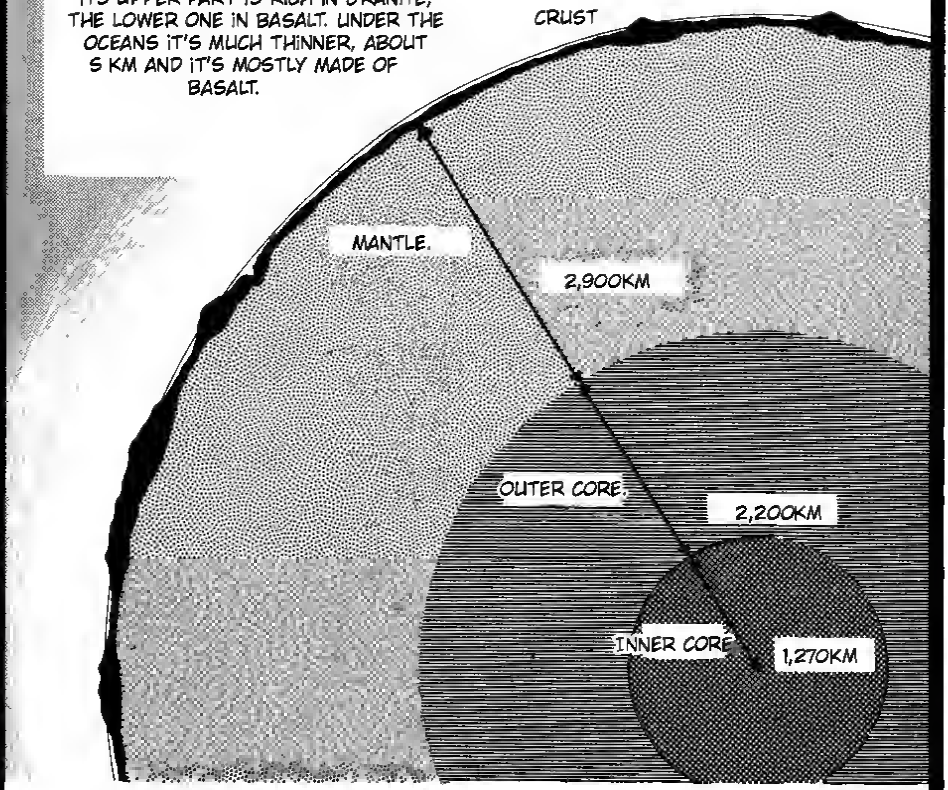
I'M SURE SOME OF YOU, PROFESSOR YUKINAGA FOR ONE, KNOW ALL ABOUT IT BUT... LET ME EXPLAIN IN SIMPLE TERMS.
カチ
AND FINALLY A THIN OUTER LAYER THE CRUST.
ALL AROUND IT WE HAVE THE MANTLE. THE WHITE OF THE EGG.
THIS IS THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF THE EARTH... AT THE CENTRE WE HAVE THE CORE, SIMILAR TO AN EGG YOLK.
ACTUALLY, BETWEEN THE CRUST AND THE MANTLE, THERE'S A BOUNDARY LAYER CALLED THE MOHOROVICIC DISCONTINUITY... BUT WE DON'T NEED TO GO INTO SUCH DETAIL.
TO BE PRECISE, THE CORE IS DIVIDED INTO AN OUTER AND AN INNER PART, THE MANTLE INTO AN UPPER AND A LOWER LEVEL, AND THE CRUST INTO SIAL AND SIMA.
YOU SHOULD ALL BE FAMILIAR WITH THIS FROM HIGH-SCHOOL.

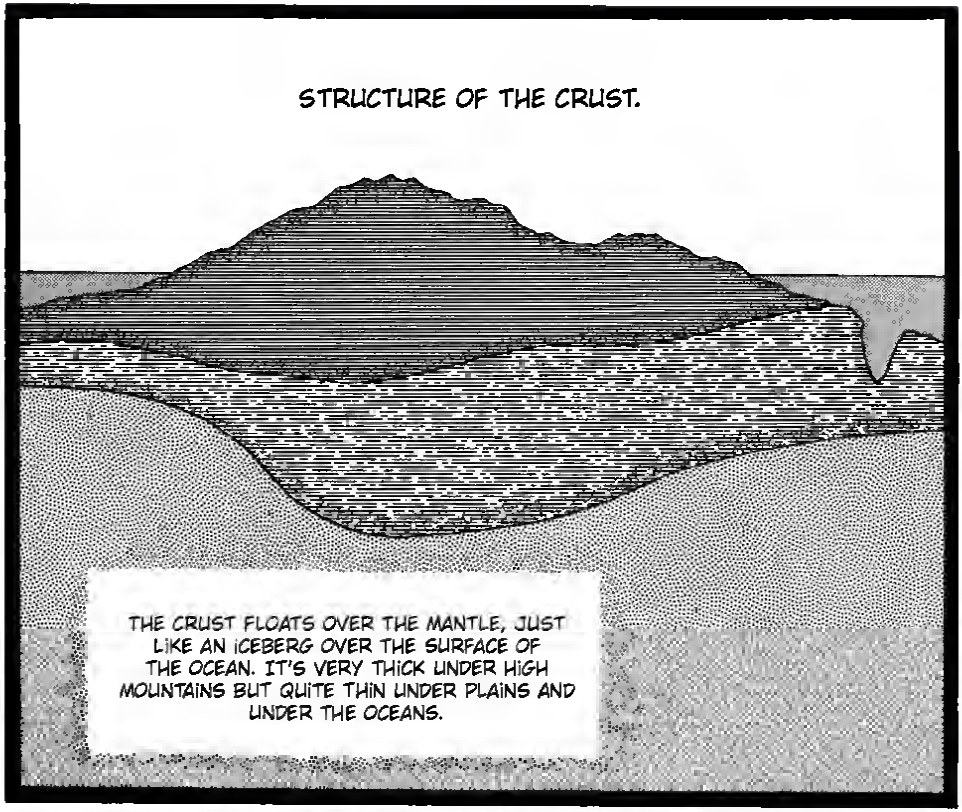
THE STRUCTURE OF THE EARTH

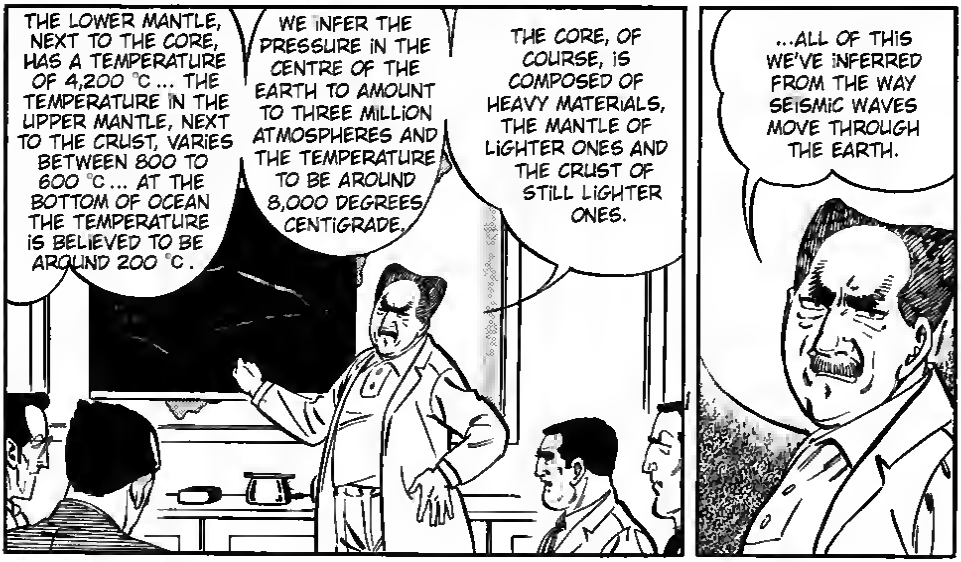
THE CRUST: UNDER THE CONTINENTS, THE CRUST IS ABOUT 35 KM THICK, ITS UPPER PART IS RICH IN GRANITE, THE LOWER ONE IN BASALT. UNDER THE OCEANS IT'S MUCH THINNER, ABOUT 5 KM AND IT'S MOSTLY MADE OF BASALT.

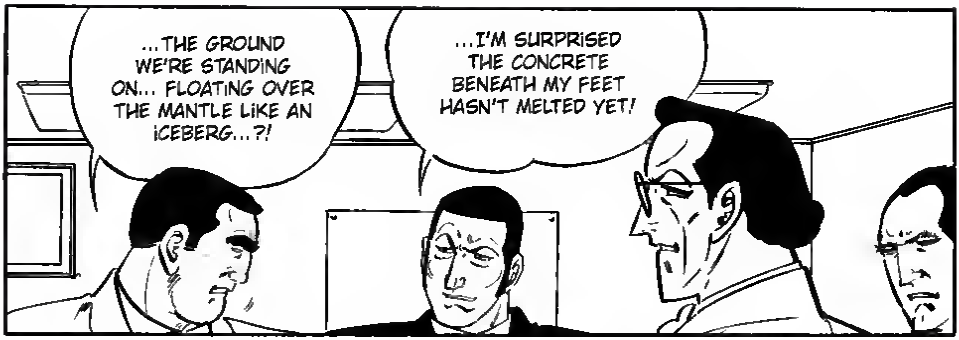


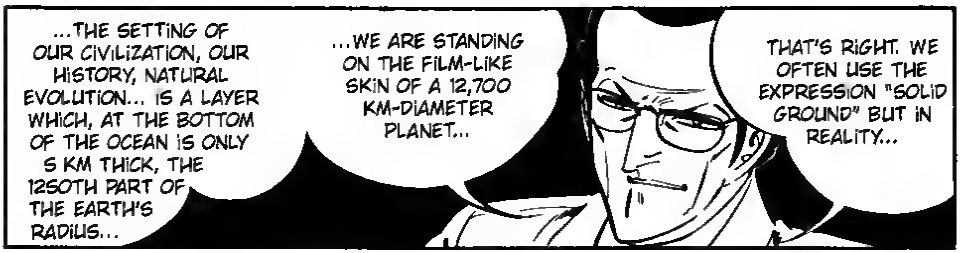
THE MANTLE: ITS UPPER LAYER IS BELIEVED TO CONSIST MOSTLY OF PERIDOTITE. IT'S MAINLY SOLID BUT PARTS OF IT BEHAVE LIKE A VERY THICK FLUID.

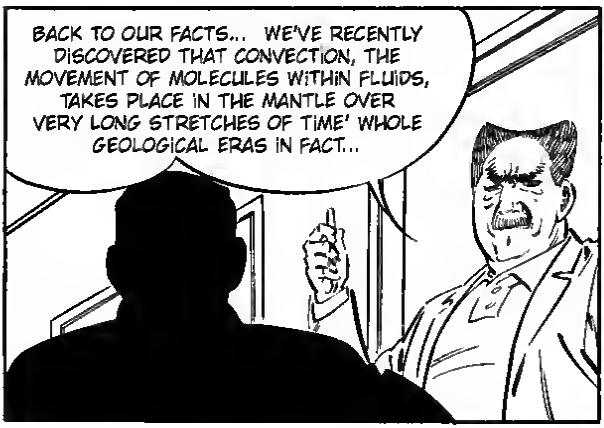
THE CORE: IT'S BELIEVED TO BE MADE MOSTLY OF IRON AND NICKEL, THE OUTER CORE IS LIQUID, THE INNER CORE IS BELIEVED TO BE SOLID.


STRUCTURE OF THE CRUST.
THE CRUST FLOATS OVER THE MANTLE, JUST LIKE AN ICEBERG OVER THE SURFACE OF THE OCEAN. IT'S VERY THICK UNDER HIGH MOUNTAINS BUT QUITE THIN UNDER PLAINS AND UNDER THE OCEANS.


THE LOWER MANTLE, NEXT TO THE CORE, HAS A TEMPERATURE OF 4,200 °C... THE TEMPERATURE IN THE UPPER MANTLE, NEXT TO THE CRUST, VARIES BETWEEN 800 TO 600 °C... AT THE BOTTOM OF OCEAN THE TEMPERATURE IS BELIEVED TO BE AROUND 200 °C.
WE INFER THE PRESSURE IN THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH TO AMOUNT TO THREE MILLION ATMOSPHERES AND THE TEMPERATURE TO BE AROUND 8,000 DEGREES CENTIGRADE.
THE CORE, OF COURSE, IS COMPOSED OF HEAVY MATERIALS, THE MANTLE OF LIGHTER ONES AND THE CRUST OF STILL LIGHTER ONES.
...ALL OF THIS WE'VE INFERRED FROM THE WAY SEISMIC WAVES MOVE THROUGH THE EARTH.

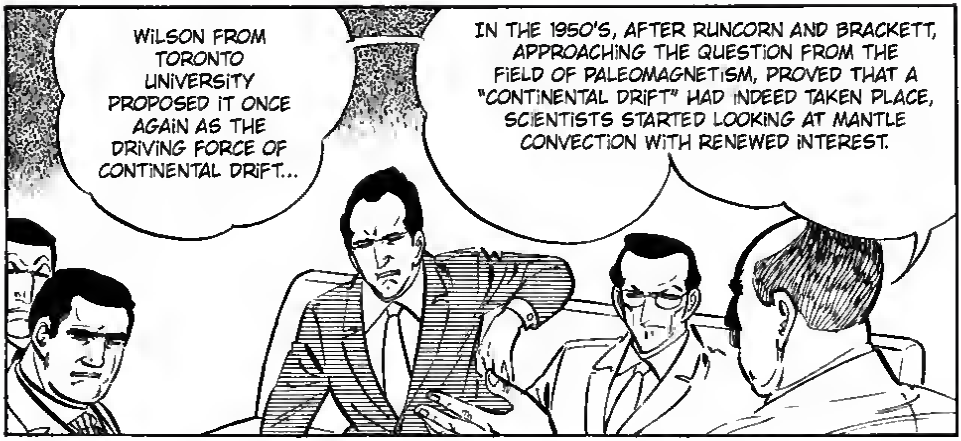

...THE GROUND WE'RE STANDING ON... FLOATING OVER THE MANTLE LIKE AN ICEBERG...?!
...I'M SURPRISED THE CONCRETE BENEATH MY FEET HASN'T MELTED YET!

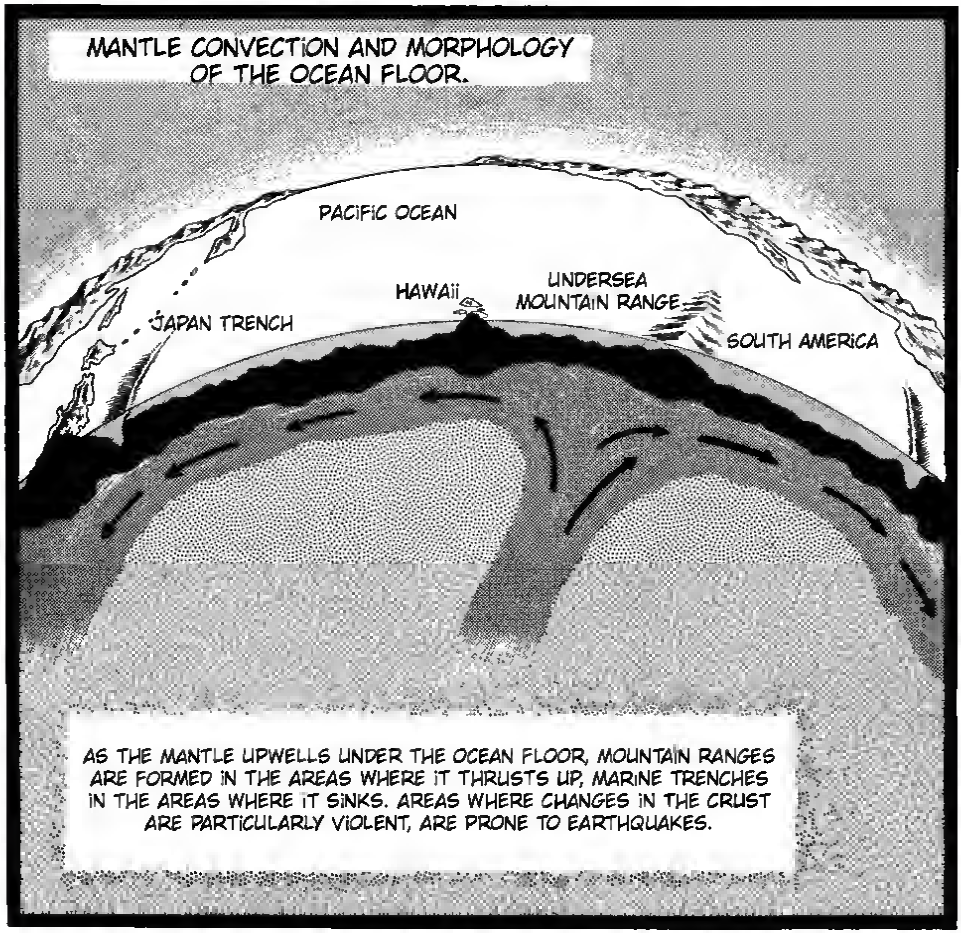

...THE SETTING OF OUR CIVILIZATION, OUR HISTORY, NATURAL EVOLUTION... IS A LAYER WHICH, AT THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN IS ONLY 5 KM THICK, THE 1250TH PART OF THE EARTH'S RADIUS...
...WE ARE STANDING ON THE FILM-LIKE SKIN OF A 12,700 KM-DIAMETER PLANET...
THAT'S RIGHT. WE OFTEN USE THE EXPRESSION "SOLID GROUND" BUT IN REALITY...


BACK TO OUR FACTS... WE'VE RECENTLY DISCOVERED THAT CONVECTION, THE MOVEMENT OF MOLECULES WITHIN FLUIDS, TAKES PLACE IN THE MANTLE OVER VERY LONG STRETCHES OF TIME' WHOLE GEOLOGICAL ERAS IN FACT...

...JUST LIKE THE 0.2 MM RUBBER MEMBRANE OF A 50CM BALLOON...!

AFTERWARDS, AS WEGENER'S THEORY WENT OUT OF FASHION, THIS HYPOTHESIS WAS ALSO ABANDONED... HOWEVER, RECENT SURVEYS OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN FLOOR HAVE UNEARTHED DATA THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH THIS HYPOTHESIS.
AS EARLY AS 1929, ARTHUR HOLMES, WRITING ABOUT WEGENER'S FAMOUS THEORY OF "CONTINENTAL DRIFT", SPECULATED THAT MANTLE CONVECTION WAS THE FORCE CAUSING THE CONTINENTS TO MOVE AWAY FROM EACH OTHER...

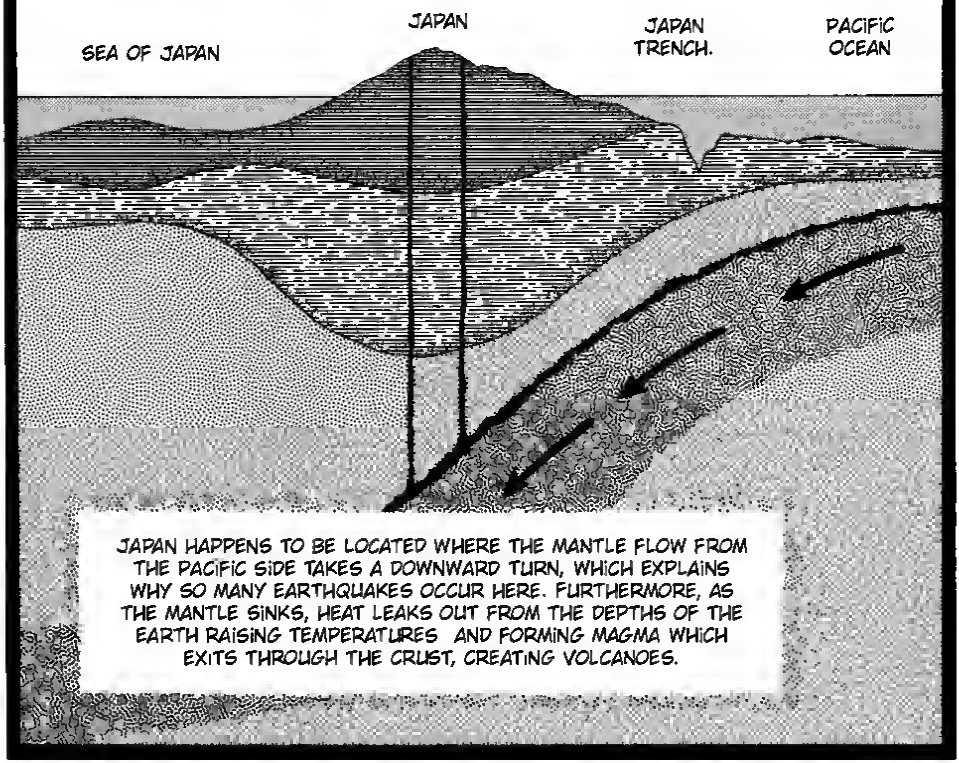

WILSON FROM TORONTO UNIVERSITY PROPOSED IT ONCE AGAIN AS THE DRIVING FORCE OF CONTINENTAL DRIFT...
IN THE 1950'S, AFTER RUNCORN AND BRACKETT, APPROACHING THE QUESTION FROM THE FIELD OF PALEOMAGNETISM, PROVED THAT A "CONTINENTAL DRIFT" HAD INDEED TAKEN PLACE, SCIENTISTS STARTED LOOKING AT MANTLE CONVECTION WITH RENEWED INTEREST.


MANTLE CONVECTION AND MORPHOLOGY OF THE OCEAN FLOOR.
PACIFIC OCEAN
HAWAII
UNDERSEA MOUNTAIN RANGE
JAPAN TRENCH
SOUTH AMERICA
AS THE MANTLE UPWELLS UNDER THE OCEAN FLOOR, MOUNTAIN RANGES ARE FORMED IN THE AREAS WHERE IT THRUSTS UP, MARINE TRENCHES IN THE AREAS WHERE IT SINKS. AREAS WHERE CHANGES IN THE CRUST ARE PARTICULARLY VIOLENT, ARE PRONE TO EARTHQUAKES.

...THIS FLOW PRODUCES UPHEAVALS OF THE CRUST'S SURFACE, PARTICULARLY BENEATH THE OCEANS, SHIFTING CONTINENTS ABOUT AND CAUSING LONG MOUNTAIN RANGES TO EMERGE ALONG THE EDGES OF CONTINENTS.

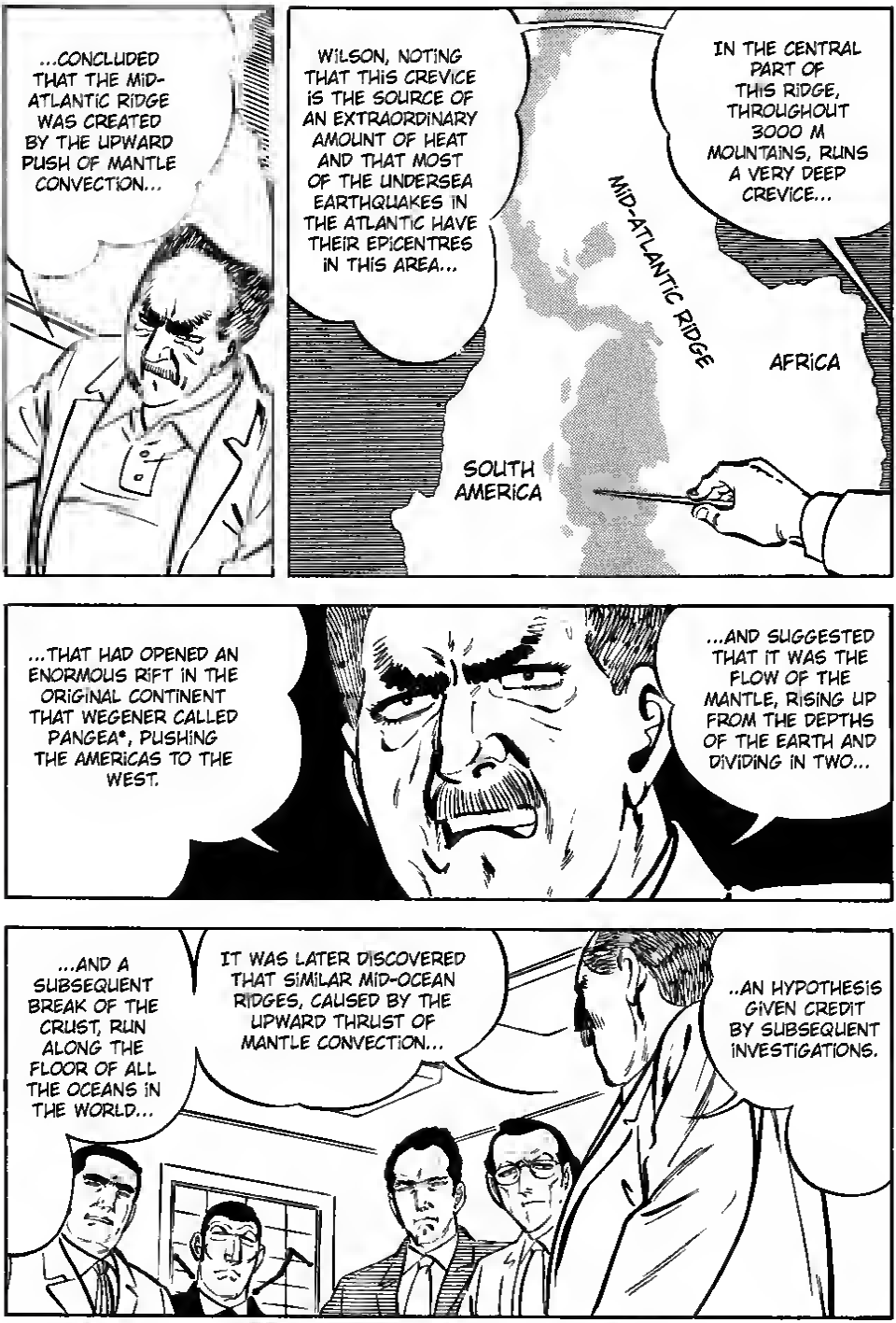
IN SHORT, THE MANTLE FLOWS UNDER THE EARTH'S CRUST AT THE COMPARATIVELY HIGH SPEED OF ONE TO TWO CM A YEAR IN ITS DEEPER REGIONS, AND TWO TO EIGHT CM A YEAR IN AREAS CLOSER TO THE SURFACE...

THE EARTH'S CRUST ALONG THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO.



JAPAN HAPPENS TO BE LOCATED WHERE THE MANTLE FLOW FROM THE PACIFIC SIDE TAKES A DOWNWARD TURN, WHICH EXPLAINS WHY SO MANY EARTHQUAKES OCCUR HERE. FURTHERMORE, AS THE MANTLE SINKS, HEAT LEAKS OUT FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH RAISING TEMPERATURES AND FORMING MAGMA WHICH EXITS THROUGH THE CRUST, CREATING VOLCANOES.

...THE QUANTITY OF GEOTHERMAL ENERGY ON THE OCEAN FLOOR WAS ALMOST THE SAME AS ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF. AS A RESULT, THE THEORY OF MANTLE CONVECTION WAS RESURRECTED.
WHEN EXTENSIVE EXPLORATION OF THE PACIFIC SEABED WAS FIRST CARRIED OUT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 1950'S IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT, CONTRARY TO PREDICTIONS...
...IT'S CALLED THE MID-ATLANTIC RIDGE AND HAS DRAWN SCIENTISTS' ATTENTION FOR A LONG TIME...
...LOOK AT THIS MASSIVE UNDERWATER MOUNTAIN SYSTEM THAT RUNS ACROSS THE ATLANTIC OCEAN FROM THE ARCTIC CIRCLE ALL THE WAY TO THE SOUTHERN POLAR REGION...
AND NOW LOOK AT THIS MAP...

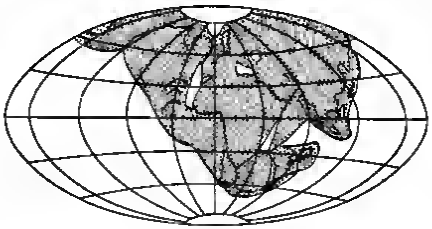

...CONCLUDED THAT THE MID-ATLANTIC RIDGE WAS CREATED BY THE UPWARD PUSH OF MANTLE CONVECTION...
WILSON, NOTING THAT THIS CREVICE IS THE SOURCE OF AN EXTRAORDINARY AMOUNT OF HEAT AND THAT MOST OF THE UNDERSEA EARTHQUAKES IN THE ATLANTIC HAVE THEIR EPICENTRES IN THIS AREA...
IN THE CENTRAL PART OF THIS RIDGE, THROUGHOUT 3000 M MOUNTAINS, RUNS A VERY DEEP CREVICE...
MID-ATLANTIC RIDGE
AFRICA
SOUTH AMERICA
...THAT HAD OPENED AN ENORMOUS RIFT IN THE ORIGINAL CONTINENT THAT WEGENER CALLED PANGEA*, PUSHING THE AMERICAS TO THE WEST.
...AND SUGGESTED THAT IT WAS THE FLOW OF THE MANTLE, RISING UP FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH AND DIVIDING IN TWO...
...AND A SUBSEQUENT BREAK OF THE CRUST, RUN ALONG THE FLOOR OF ALL THE OCEANS IN THE WORLD...
IT WAS LATER DISCOVERED THAT SIMILAR MID-OCEAN RIDGES, CAUSED BY THE UPWARD THRUST OF MANTLE CONVECTION...
..AN HYPOTHESIS GIVEN CREDIT BY SUBSEQUENT INVESTIGATIONS.

PANGEA* THE NAME OF THE ORIGINAL SUPERCONTINENT PROPOSED BY WEGENER IN HIS "CONTINENTAL DRIFT" THEORY. ITS BREAK UP GAVE RISE TO PRESENT-DAY CONTINENTS

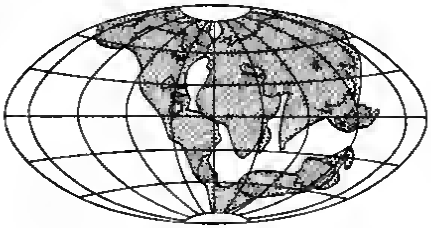
HISTORY OF WEGENER'S THEORY OF CONTINENTAL DRIFT.

IN 1929, A GERMAN SCIENTIST NAMED WEGENER, LOOKING AT A MAP, NOTICED THAT THE COASTLINES OF EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA, AND THOSE OF AFRICA AND SOUTH AMERICA, FIT TOGETHER LIKE A JIGSAW PUZZLE AND FORMULATED THE THEORY OF "CONTINENTAL DRIFT".

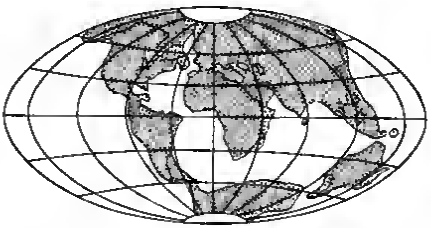
HOWEVER, SINCE HIS THEORY COULD NOT BE PROVEN BY THE SCIENCE OF THE TIME, HIS IDEAS WERE MET WITH SCEPTICISM BY THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY AND HE DIED AN UNTIMELY DEATH IN 1930. THESE DAYS HIS THEORY HAS BEEN UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED.



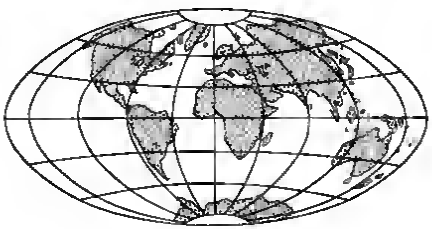
UPPER CARBONIFEROUS
(APPROX. TWO HUNDRED MILLION YEARS AGO)



MID-TERTIARY PERIOD
(APPROX. ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY MILLION YEARS AGO)



EARLY QUATERNARY PERIOD
(APPROX. SIXTY-FIVE MILLION YEARS AGO)



PRESENT

UNTIL NOW, HOWEVER, MANTLE CONVECTION AND MID-OCEAN RIDGES HAVE ONLY BEEN INFERRED INDIRECTLY FROM CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE... AND THOUGH NOBODY OPENLY QUESTIONS THEIR EXISTENCE, NO IRREFUTABLE PROOF HAS YET EMERGED.
...AND I'M NOW ABSOLUTELY CONFIDENT I CAN PREDICT THE EMERGENCE OF ENTIRELY NEW PHENOMENA.
...AND TO COME UP WITH A COMPREHENSIVE EXPLANATION OF THEIR EFFECTS...
BUT THANKS TO A METHOD I'VE DEVELOPED, AND NOT YET DISCLOSED, I WAS ABLE TO MAKE VERY DETAILED DIAGRAMS OF THESE MANTLE CONVEC-TIONS...
... A MERE REPETITION OF PAST EVENTS. OCCASIONALLY NEW PATTERNS ALSO EMERGE.
YES, HISTORY IS NOT...
...SUDDENLY OCCUR IN THE PRESENT?
CAN SOMETHING THAT'S NEVER TAKEN PLACE IN THE PAST...

...
...A CHANGE IN THE PATTERN OF MANTLE CONVEC-TION?
ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...
グラ
PROFESSOR TADORO!
PROFES-SOR!
...I'M JUST TIRED, THAT'S ALL....
I'M FINE, I'M FINE.

...WHAT CONSE-QUENCES WILL IT HAVE?
...THIS CHANGE IN THE PATTERN OF MANTLE CONVEC-TION...
...WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?
SO, PROFES-SOR TADORO..
IF THE POST THAT PROPS UP THE PACIFIC SIDE SHOULD COLLAPSE, WHAT DO YOU IMAGINE WOULD HAPPEN?
THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO IS KEPT IN ITS PRESENT POSITION BY THE MANTLE THAT PUSHES FROM THE SEA OF JAPAN SIDE AND THE MANTLE FROM THE PACIFIC SIDE...
EVEN A CHILD COULD TELL YOU THAT!
I DON'T KNOW!
...IN CASE OF A CHANGE OF THIS MAGNITUDE?
WHAT WOULD BE THE ORDER OF THE DAMAGE...
IN THE WORST-CASE SCENARIO... THE WHOLE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO COULD VANISH UNDER THE SEA
HOWEVER, THEY WOULD BE NOTHING BUT... COLLATERAL DAMAGE.
YES... WE WOULD SEE EARTH-QUAKES...
WOULD WE SEE EARTHQUAKES OF MAGNITUDE HIGHER THAN EIGHT...?

...BUT... THAT'S...
...JAPAN... SINKING...?
...
ガタガタ
...THE EPICENTRE MUST BE VERY CLOSE.
...IT'S SHAKING AGAIN...
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ゴォォォ……
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…A…T-
TSUNAMI!
R-RUN!

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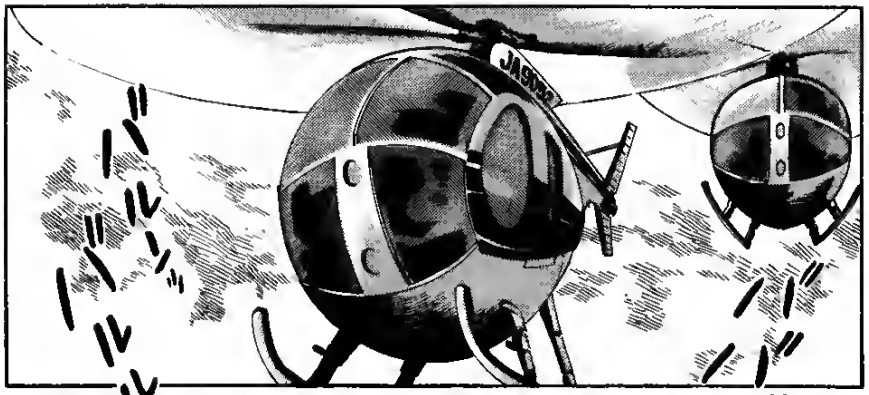
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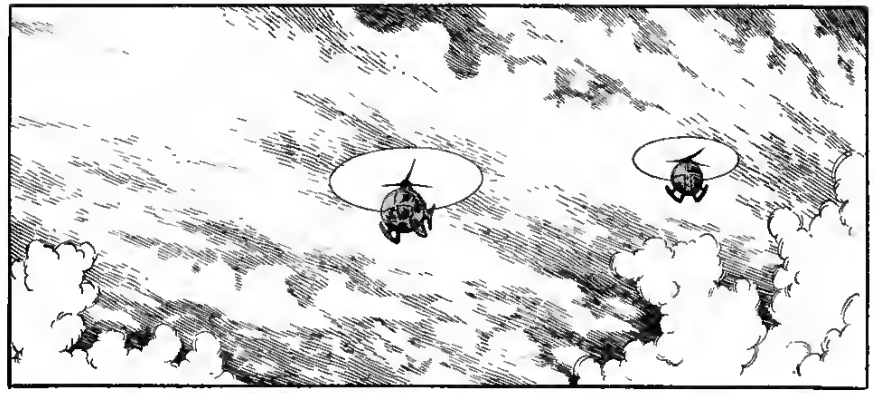
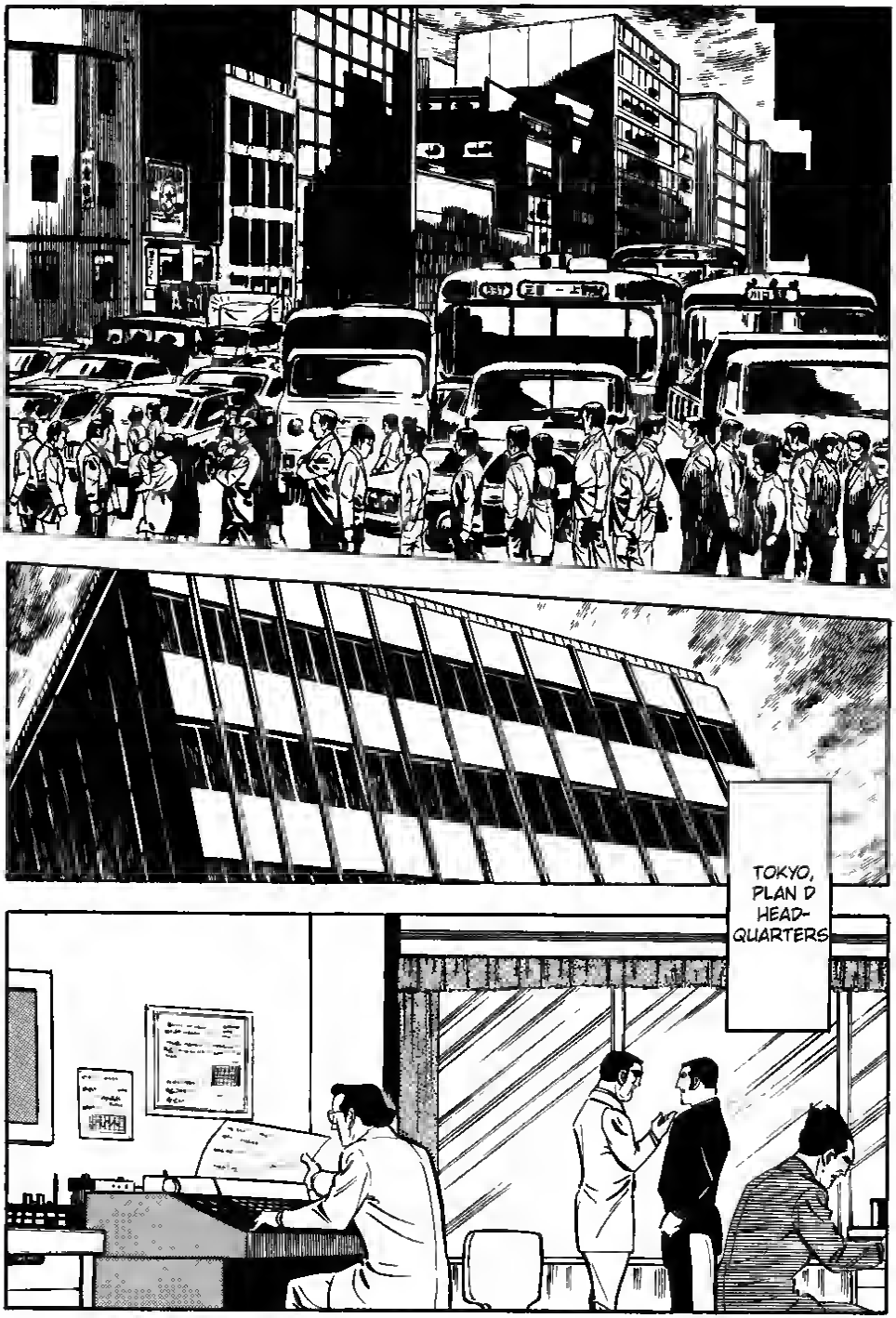


Chapter 4: Government

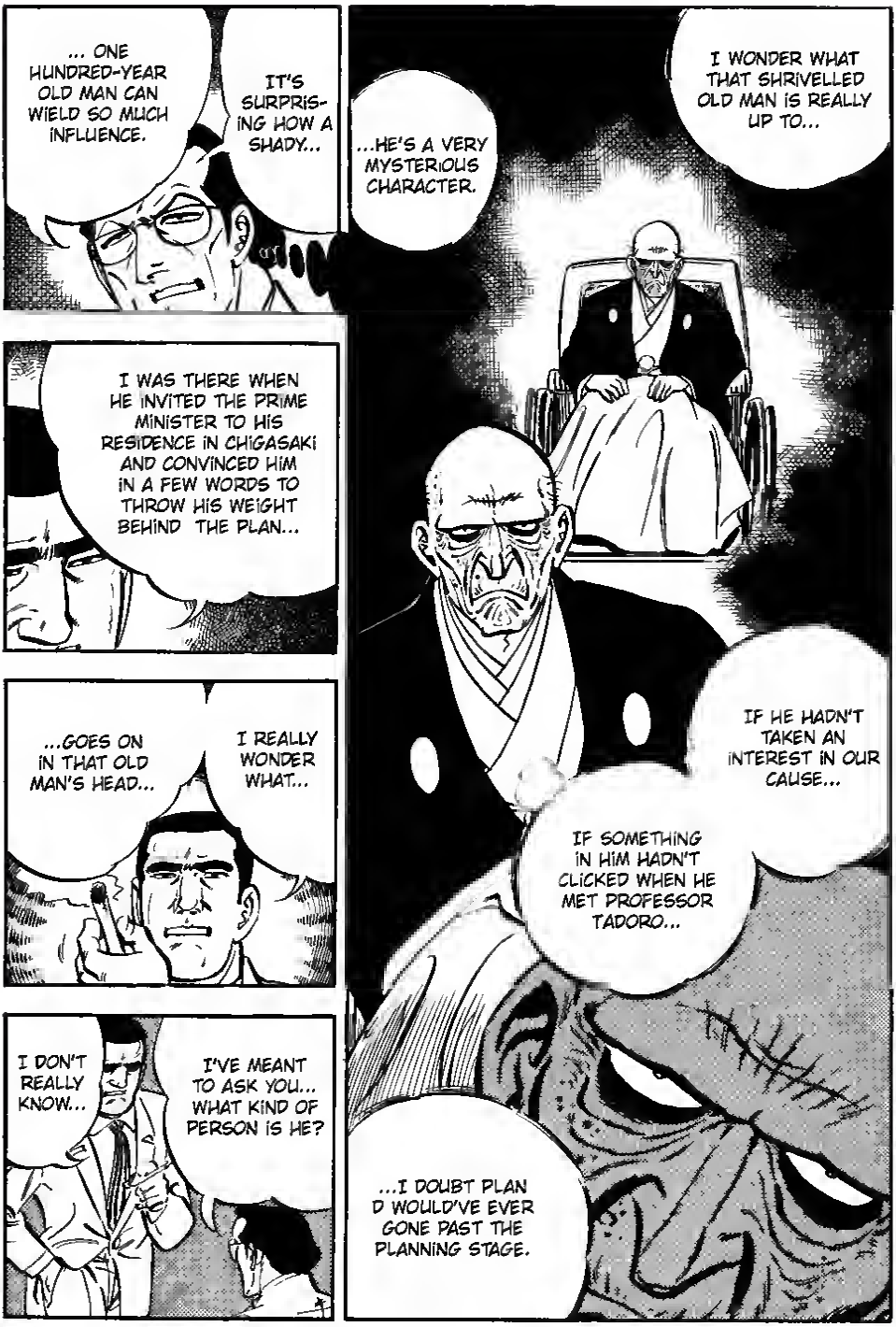
...AND KYOTO, CHUGOKU, ASO, KIRISHIMA... HOW MANY TIMES HAVE WE HAD TO APPLY THE NATURAL DISASTER RELIEF ACT THIS YEAR?
FIRST MT. AMAGI'S ERUPTION, THEN THE IZU EARTH-QUAKE...
UHM... THE DAMAGE IS MORE EXTENSIVE THAN I IMAGINED...
NOBODY CAN WIN AGAINST NATURE...
IN THAT CASE, WE MAY HAVE TO PASS A SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET.
I HAVE A FEELING WE HAVEN'T SEEN THE END OF IT YET, SIR.

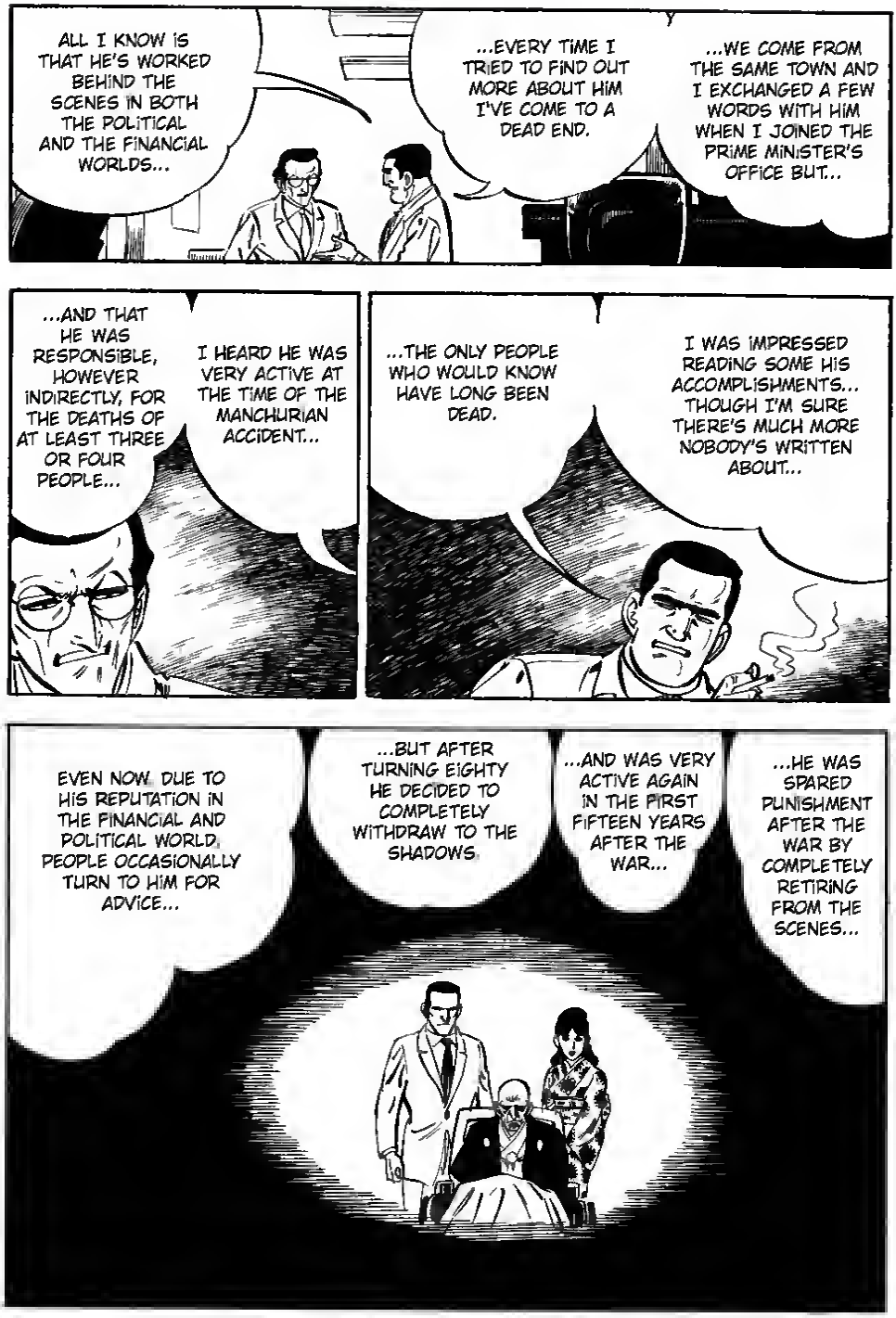

TOKYO, PLAN D HEAD-QUARTERS

JAPAN IS A HUGE ISLAND... IT CONTAINS WHOLE MOUNTAIN CHAINS... IT'S OVER 2,000 KM LONG...
...ME NEITHER...
...I JUST CAN'T WRAP MY HEAD AROUND IT.
...JAPAN SINKING...
WHAT WE NEED TO DO NOW IS TO COLLECT AS MUCH DATA AS POSSIBLE.
PROFESSOR TADORO'S HUNCHES ARE HARDLY EVER WRONG.
WE CAN ALWAYS PRAY THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH PROFESSOR TADORO'S HUNCH OR HIS CALCULATIONS.
WE DON'T KNOW FOR SURE YET...
...I NOTICED THAT WE'RE ALREADY OVER THE BUDGET ALLOTTED BY THE CABINET'S RESEARCH DIVISION FOR THE FIRST STAGE OF THE PLAN.
I'VE BEEN GOING OVER PROFESSOR TADORO'S PLANS AND...
LET'S LEAVE ALL MONEY WORRIES TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S CIRCLE
...AND HERE I WAS THINKING I'D LIKE ONE MORE LSI COMPUTER.
...UHM... IT MUST BE THE PURCHASE OF THE KERMADIK ...

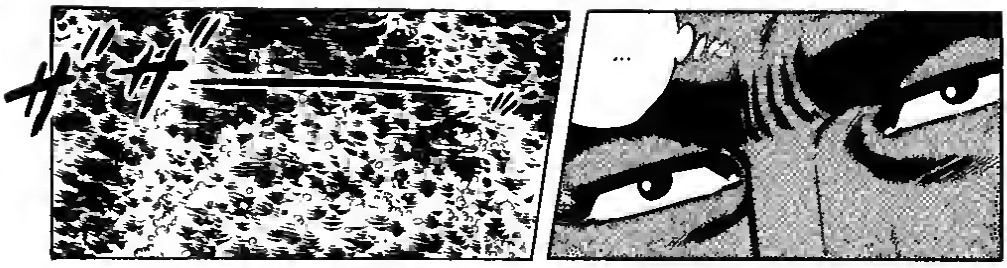
WHERE'S PROFESSOR TADORO?
...AND FORGET ABOUT THE REST.
SO LET'S FOCUS ON WHAT WE CAN GET DONE...
WE COULDN'T FIND A SOLUTION EVEN IF WE TRIED...
I'LL TAKE A SHORT BREAK, THEN.
HE'S AT A MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER. SHOULD BE BACK SOON.
... ABOUT THE SURVEY SCHEDULE.
I'D LIKE TO HAVE A WORD WITH HIM...
WE'LL COME LATER.
...A COFFEE OR SOMETHING?
ARE YOU COMING FOR...

I HEARD THE OLD MAN, WATARI, SOLD PART OF HIS ART COLLECTION...
...
THEY SAY SOME OF HIS PAINTINGS ARE CONSIDERED NATIONAL TREASURES...
I THINK SO...
IS THAT HOW HE GETS THE MONEY TO BANKROLL OUR PROJECT?


... ONE HUNDRED-YEAR OLD MAN CAN WIELD SO MUCH INFLUENCE.
IT'S SURPRIS-ING HOW A SHADY...
...HE'S A VERY MYSTERIOUS CHARACTER.
I WONDER WHAT THAT SHRIVELLED OLD MAN IS REALLY UP TO...
I WAS THERE WHEN HE INVITED THE PRIME MINISTER TO HIS RESIDENCE IN CHIGASAKI AND CONVINCED HIM IN A FEW WORDS TO THROW HIS WEIGHT BEHIND THE PLAN...
...GOES ON IN THAT OLD MAN'S HEAD...
I REALLY WONDER WHAT...
IF HE HADN'T TAKEN AN INTEREST IN OUR CAUSE...
IF SOMETHING IN HIM HADN'T CLICKED WHEN HE MET PROFESSOR TADORO...
I DON'T REALLY KNOW...
I'VE MEANT TO ASK YOU... WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS HE?
...I DOUBT PLAN D WOULD'VE EVER GONE PAST THE PLANNING STAGE.


ALL I KNOW IS THAT HE'S WORKED BEHIND THE SCENES IN BOTH THE POLITICAL AND THE FINANCIAL WORLDS...
...EVERY TIME I TRIED TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HIM I'VE COME TO A DEAD END.
...WE COME FROM THE SAME TOWN AND I EXCHANGED A FEW WORDS WITH HIM WHEN I JOINED THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE BUT...
...AND THAT HE WAS RESPONSIBLE, HOWEVER INDIRECTLY, FOR THE DEATHS OF AT LEAST THREE OR FOUR PEOPLE...
I HEARD HE WAS VERY ACTIVE AT THE TIME OF THE MANCHURIAN ACCIDENT...
...THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO WOULD KNOW HAVE LONG BEEN DEAD.
I WAS IMPRESSED READING SOME HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS... THOUGH I'M SURE THERE'S MUCH MORE NOBODY'S WRITTEN ABOUT...
EVEN NOW, DUE TO HIS REPUTATION IN THE FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL WORLD, PEOPLE OCCASIONALLY TURN TO HIM FOR ADVICE...
...BUT AFTER TURNING EIGHTY HE DECIDED TO COMPLETELY WITHDRAW TO THE SHADOWS.
...AND WAS VERY ACTIVE AGAIN IN THE FIRST FIFTEEN YEARS AFTER THE WAR...
...HE WAS SPARED PUNISHMENT AFTER THE WAR BY COMPLETELY RETIRING FROM THE SCENES...

...IT SEEMS HE HELPED HUSH A MAJOR SCANDAL BACK IN THE DAY.
THE PRIME MINISTER KNOWS HIM FROM THE OLD TIMES AND CANNOT REFUSE HIM A FAVOUR...
...HE'S BEEN THROUGH IT ALL.
HE'S BEEN AROUND SINCE THE MEIJI ERA AND KNOWS ALL THE DARK SECRETS OF THE PAST EIGHTY YEARS...
I FEEL THE SAME WAY.
...I'M VERY REMOVED FROM THAT WORLD.
ALL THESE STORIES MAKE ME UNEASY...
WHAT DOES HE REALLY THINK...? WHAT IS HE TRYING TO ACHIEVE...?
HE'S LIVED TO A HUNDRED YEARS, HE'S BEEN IN A POSITION OF AUTHORITY...
...WHAT IT MUST BE LIKE TO LIVE FOR A WHOLE CENTURY.
I WONDER...
...
...
ALL I KNOW IS THAT THANKS TO HIS INFLUENCE PLAN D GOT UNDER WAY.
I HAVE NO IDEA...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...

...AND NOW THEY'RE PROBABLY MAD AS HELL AT ME.
THEY MUST'VE BEEN VERY WORRIED...
I WONDER IF DEEP SEA ENTERPRISE RECEIVED MY LETTER OF RESIGNATION FROM NAPLES...
THANK YOU.
WE'LL SOON BE PASSING THROUGH OKINAWA, MR. ONODERA...
CAN I MAKE A PHONE CALL TO TOKYO, THEN...?

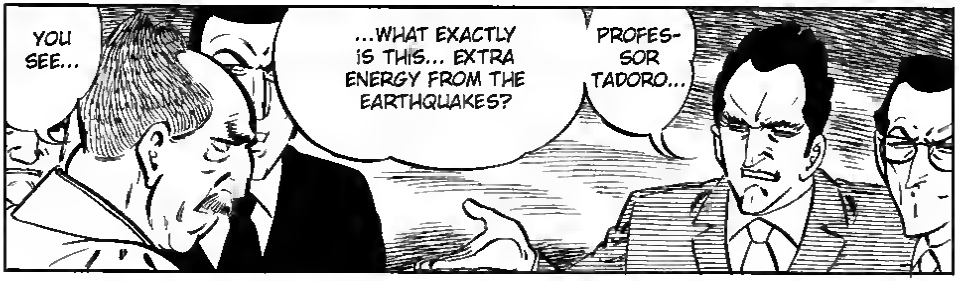
HAS IT SUNK?
WHY IS IT TAKING SO LONG?
...HAS IT ARRIVED YET?
WHAT'S WITH THE KERMADIK?
IT'S THE JAPAN TRENCH WE NEED TO INVESTIGATE! IT WILL TAKE TWO EXTRA DAYS IF SHE HAS TO GO THAT FAR WEST!
WHY IS IT GOING THROUGH THERE?
MOJI...?
IT WILL REACH MOJI TOMORROW.
EVERY-THING'S ALL RIGHT.

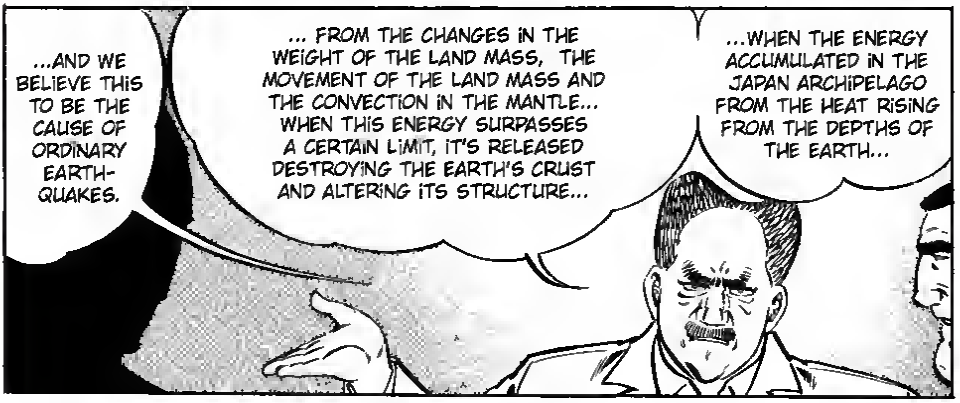
ONCE IT CLEARS CUSTOMS, IT WILL BE LOADED ONTO THE TAKATSUKI, A MARITIME SELF-DEFENCE SHIP AND TAKEN TO ISE. THE DIVING TESTS WILL TAKE PLACE IN TOBA BAY AND THE KUMANO SEA.
IN KOBE OR YOKOHAMA, THE REPORTERS WOULD BE ON TO US IN NO TIME. BUT IN MOJI... EVEN IF SOMEONE FOUND OUT, IT WOULD ONLY MAKE THE LOCAL NEWS...
WE WANT TO KEEP HER OUT OF THE PUBLIC EYE, PROFESSOR...
AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA OFF THE SANRIKU COAST THERE ARE SEVERAL EARTHQUAKES OF MEDIUM TO LOW INTENSITY EVERY DAY!
ONE SECTION OF THE RIKUCHU COAST IS SINKING AT A SPEED OF HALF A CENTIMETRE A DAY!
READ HERE!
THERE'S NO TIME TO WASTE.
I'M GOING TO ISE, THEN.
BUT IT WILL TAKE AT LEAST ANOTHER WEEK TO TEN DAYS BEFORE IT'S ALL ASSEMBLED AND INSTALLED.
SOME OF IT HAS ALREADY BEEN SENT TO TOBA AND MOJI.
...TEN DAYS?!
IT'S THE AREA IN THE JAPAN TRENCH CLOSEST TO THE MAINLAND... BUT WE MUST HURRY! WHEN WILL THE SURVEY EQUIPMENT BE HERE?
WE'VE GOT TO START HERE!

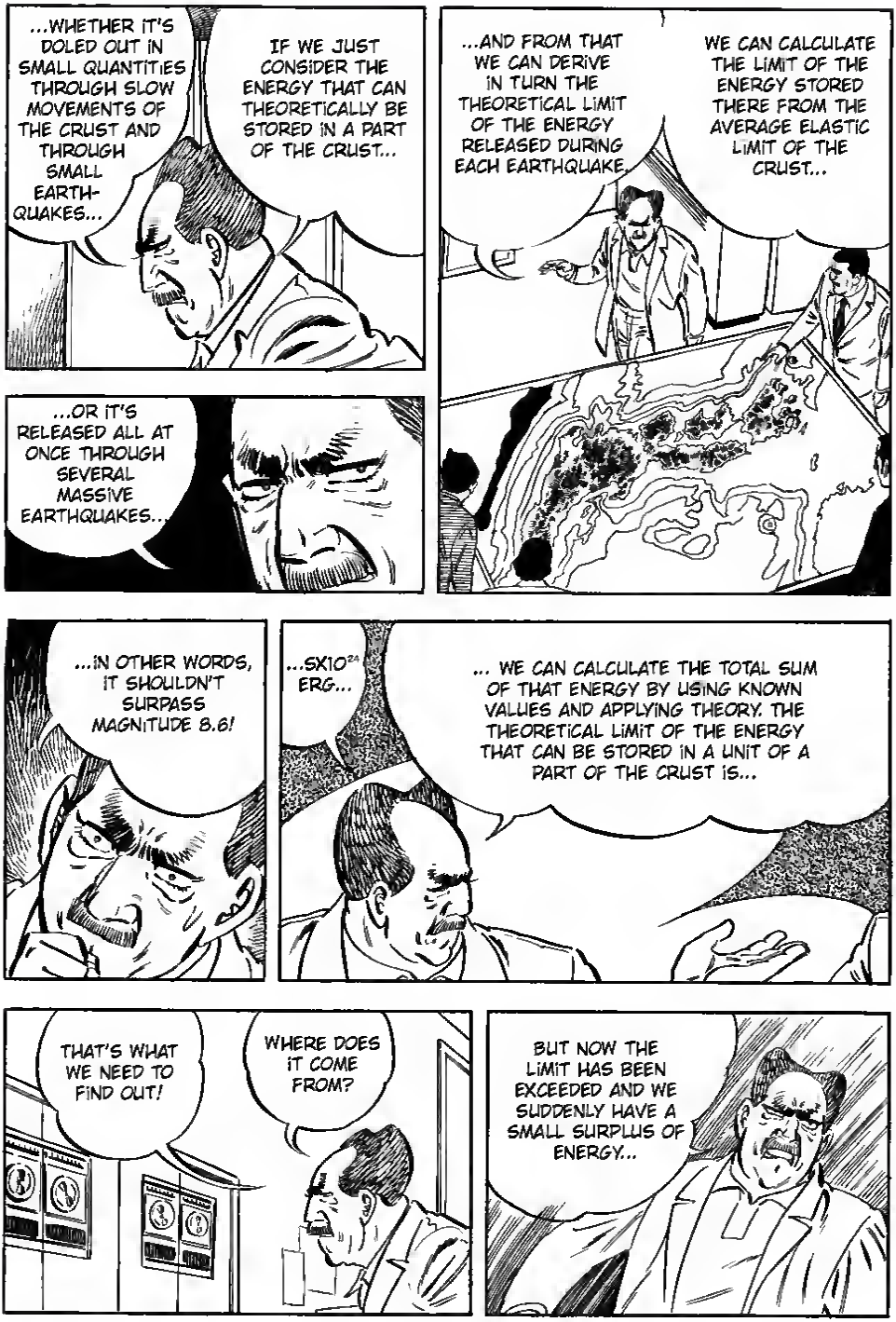
I HAVE NO IDEA HOW THINGS WILL EVOLVE... BUT THAT'S WHAT WE NEED TO FIND OUT!
WHILE WE'RE WASTING TIME, UNDERNEATH THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO CHANGES ARE TAKING PLACE AT IMPRESSIVE SPEED!
DAMN IT! WE CAN'T WAIT THAT LONG!
...BUT TIME IS THE ONLY THING WE CAN DO NOTHING ABOUT.
WE UNDERSTAND YOUR FEARS, PROFESSOR...
WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF WE DON'T MAKE IT IN TIME?
OUR WORK IS BUT A RACE AGAINST TIME!
LET ME MAKE IT CLEAR!

THEY EXPECT TO BE IN MOJI TOMORROW MORNING.
...IT WAS ONODERA, FROM ABOARD THE CRISTINA.
WELL DONE, YOU MUST BE VERY TIRED...
I SEE...
A JAPANESE ONE WOULD'VE BEEN TOO CONSPICUOUS.
A DUTCH SHIP.
WE USED... A FOREIGN SHIP?
...A STRONG QUAKE IN KOMORO... LIMITED DAMAGE... LANDSLIDES IN SAKU...
...AND THAT PEOPLE KEEP A COOL HEAD AND DON'T PANIC...
I JUST HOPE IT STOPS SOON...

...THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF ENERGY IN EARTHQUAKES AND IN THE MOVEMENT OF THE EARTH'S CRUST OVER THE PAST YEAR IN THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO...
IT WOULD SEEM THAT...
HAVE A LOOK AT THESE CALCU-LATIONS.
PROFES-SOR.
...
...IN OTHER WORDS, NO MORE THAN MAGNITUDE 8.6.
...$X10^{24}$ ERG...
...THE ESTIMATED THEORETICAL LIMIT.
...HAS EXCEEDED, HOWEVER SLIGHTLY...
...WHERE DOES IT COME FROM? WHAT'S THE SOURCE?
EXTRA ENERGY...?
...DOES THE EXCESS ENERGY ORIGINATE?
YOU HEAR ME? WHERE THE HELL...
...


YOU SEE...
...WHAT EXACTLY IS THIS... EXTRA ENERGY FROM THE EARTHQUAKES?
PROFES-SOR TADORO...

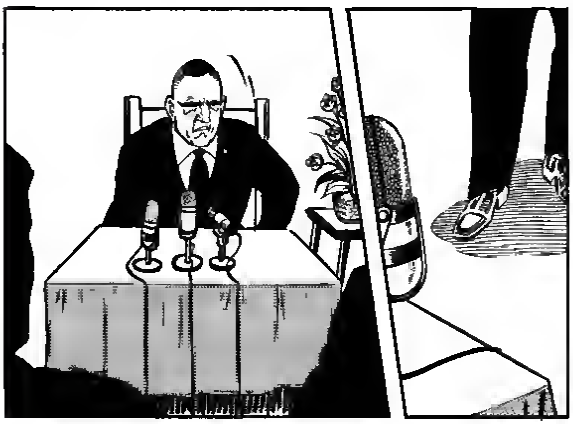

...AND WE BELIEVE THIS TO BE THE CAUSE OF ORDINARY EARTH-QUAKES.
... FROM THE CHANGES IN THE WEIGHT OF THE LAND MASS, THE MOVEMENT OF THE LAND MASS AND THE CONVECTION IN THE MANTLE... WHEN THIS ENERGY SURPASSES A CERTAIN LIMIT, IT'S RELEASED DESTROYING THE EARTH'S CRUST AND ALTERING ITS STRUCTURE...
...WHEN THE ENERGY ACCUMULATED IN THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO FROM THE HEAT RISING FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH...


...WHETHER IT'S DOLED OUT IN SMALL QUANTITIES THROUGH SLOW MOVEMENTS OF THE CRUST AND THROUGH SMALL EARTH-QUAKES...
IF WE JUST CONSIDER THE ENERGY THAT CAN THEORETICALLY BE STORED IN A PART OF THE CRUST...
...OR IT'S RELEASED ALL AT ONCE THROUGH SEVERAL MASSIVE EARTHQUAKES...
...AND FROM THAT WE CAN DERIVE IN TURN THE THEORETICAL LIMIT OF THE ENERGY RELEASED DURING EACH EARTHQUAKE.
WE CAN CALCULATE THE LIMIT OF THE ENERGY STORED THERE FROM THE AVERAGE ELASTIC LIMIT OF THE CRUST...
...IN OTHER WORDS, IT SHOULDN'T SURPASS MAGNITUDE 8.6!
...SX10^{24} ERG...
... WE CAN CALCULATE THE TOTAL SUM OF THAT ENERGY BY USING KNOWN VALUES AND APPLYING THEORY. THE THEORETICAL LIMIT OF THE ENERGY THAT CAN BE STORED IN A UNIT OF A PART OF THE CRUST IS...
THAT'S WHAT WE NEED TO FIND OUT!
WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?
BUT NOW THE LIMIT HAS BEEN EXCEEDED AND WE SUDDENLY HAVE A SMALL SURPLUS OF ENERGY...

WE NEED DATA!
BUT WITHOUT NEW DATA TO FEED THE COMPUTER, WE'LL NEVER GET A DEFINITE ANSWER...
THERE'S NO POINT IN-
BUT, PROFES-SOR...
OKAY?
I'M GOING TO MOJI TOO, NAKATA.
...I'LL MAKE A CALL TO YOKOSUKA, THEN.
WELL, IF YOU INSIST...
I HEARD THAT MT. ASO AND KIRISHIMA ARE SPEWING UP SMOKE AGAIN... AND THAT WORRIES ME.
I JUST WANT TO CHECK THE SITUATION IN WESTERN JAPAN ONE MORE TIME...
ARRANGE IT!
...I THOUGHT YOU MAY WANT TO FLY OVER MT. ASO...
A NAVY COURIER PLANE IS LEAVING SOON...
ARE THERE NO COM-MERCIAL FLIGHTS?

SHHH!
"TOWARDS A NEW WORLD"...UHM... IT DOESN'T SOUND VERY ORIGINAL.

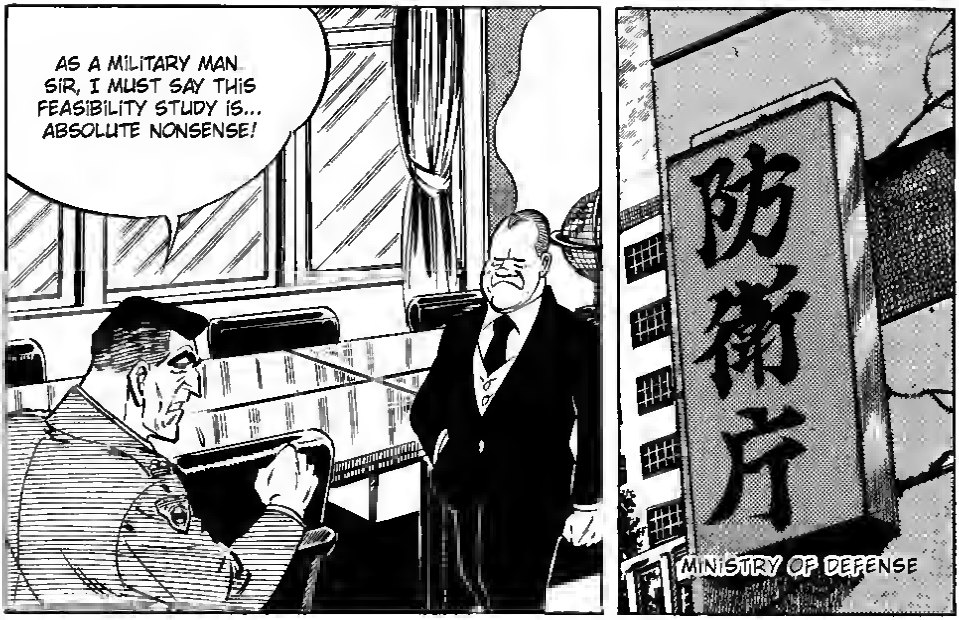
"TO-WARDS A NEW WORLD" ...?



YES?
...TODAY I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU ABOUT YOUR ADMINISTRATION'S NEW SLOGAN, "TOWARDS A NEW WORLD"...
PRIME MINISTER..
OUR MODERN JAPANESE SOCIETY HAS BECOME TOO INWARD-LOOKING...
NOT AT ALL.
SOME PEOPLE SEEM TO THINK IT'S A FAIRLY OLD-FASHIONED CONCEPT...
...BIWA LAKE'S LANDLOCKED TINY AYU, OR THE KOKANEE OF TOHOKU REGION, LACKING ACCESS TO THE OCEAN, INSTEAD OF GROWING WILL STAY SMALL UNTIL THEY DIE.
THINK OF THE SALMON OR THE TROUT THAT, BORN IN THE RIVER, DESCEND TO THE SEA AND BY SWIMMING IN THE VAST OCEAN DEVELOP INTO STRONG, MATURE FISH. ON THE OTHER HAND...
...WE DO NOT OFFER OUR YOUTH MANY CHANCES TO MATURE INTO FULL-GROWN MEN.

SO, PRIME MINISTER, THIS "TOWARDS A NEW WORLD" OF YOURS...
...IS TO LOOK FOR A NEW WORLD OUTSIDE JAPAN!
THE ONLY WAY OUT...
...IT'S BECOME TOO INSULAR...
JAPANESE SOCIETY HAS LOST ITS DRIVE...
...SOMETHING IMMENSELY MORE AMBITIOUS!
NO, I'M THINKING OF...
...OR A NEW IMMIGRATION POLICY?
...IS IT A NEW YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM?
THE JAPANESE PEOPLE, THE JAPANESE FIRMS MUST STOP THINKING ONLY ABOUT JAPAN'S INTEREST...
...BUT OUR CURRENT WAY OF DOING BUSINESS IS CREATING A LOT OF ENEMIES.
...WHETHER FOR PURCHASING RAW MATERIALS OR EXPORTING GOODS...
THE JAPANESE ECONOMY IS GOING TO BECOME INCREASINGLY DEPENDENT ON THE REST WORLD...
TOWARDS THIS WE MUST STRIVE!
THIS HAS TO BE OUR GOAL FOR THE FUTURE!
WE NEED TO START THINKING ABOUT WAYS TO HELP MANKIND!
... JAPANESE SOCIETY AS A WHOLE NEEDS TO OPEN UP TO THE WORLD!

WELL, WELL... LOOKS LIKE HE DID IT.
NO, IT'S SOMETHING THE POLITICIANS AND THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN THE LOOP HAVE COME UP WITH. WE JUST... GAVE THEM A FEW SUGGESTIONS.
IS THAT YOUR IDEA TOO, NAKATA?
...HAS LAUNCHED HIS "TOWARDS A NEW WORLD!" CAMPAIGN
THE PRIME MINISTER, DURING A MEETING WITH THE PRESS...
...IT'S FROM THE OLD DAYS OF THE IMMIGRATION BOOM, IN THE THIRTIES.
UHM... THAT'S AN INTERE-STING TOUCH.
"IF YOU GO, I WILL GO TOO, I'M TIRED OF LIVING... IN WOBBLY OLD JAPAN."
...YOU NEVER KNOW... SOMEONE COULD PUT THINGS TOGETHER...
BUT WE NEED TO BE VERY CAREFUL...
...
IT'S POSSIBLE... THERE ARE A LOT OF CLEVER PEOPLE IN JAPAN.
DO YOU REALLY THINK SOMEONE COULD BE CLEVER ENOUGH TO MAKE A CONNECTION WITH THE EARTHQUAKES?
... "TOWARDS A NEW WORLD!" ...?


AS A MILITARY MAN... SIR, I MUST SAY THIS FEASIBILITY STUDY IS... ABSOLUTE NONSENSE!
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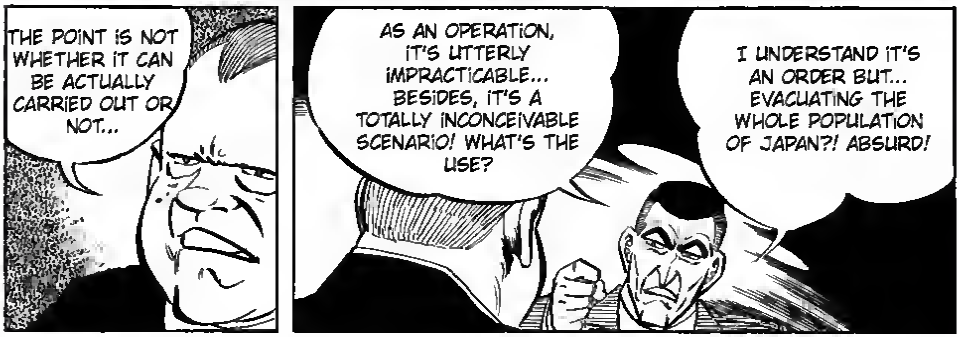
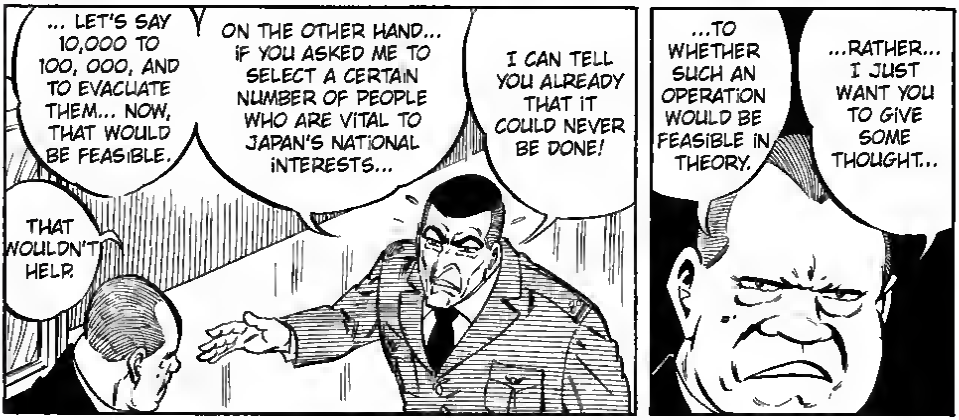
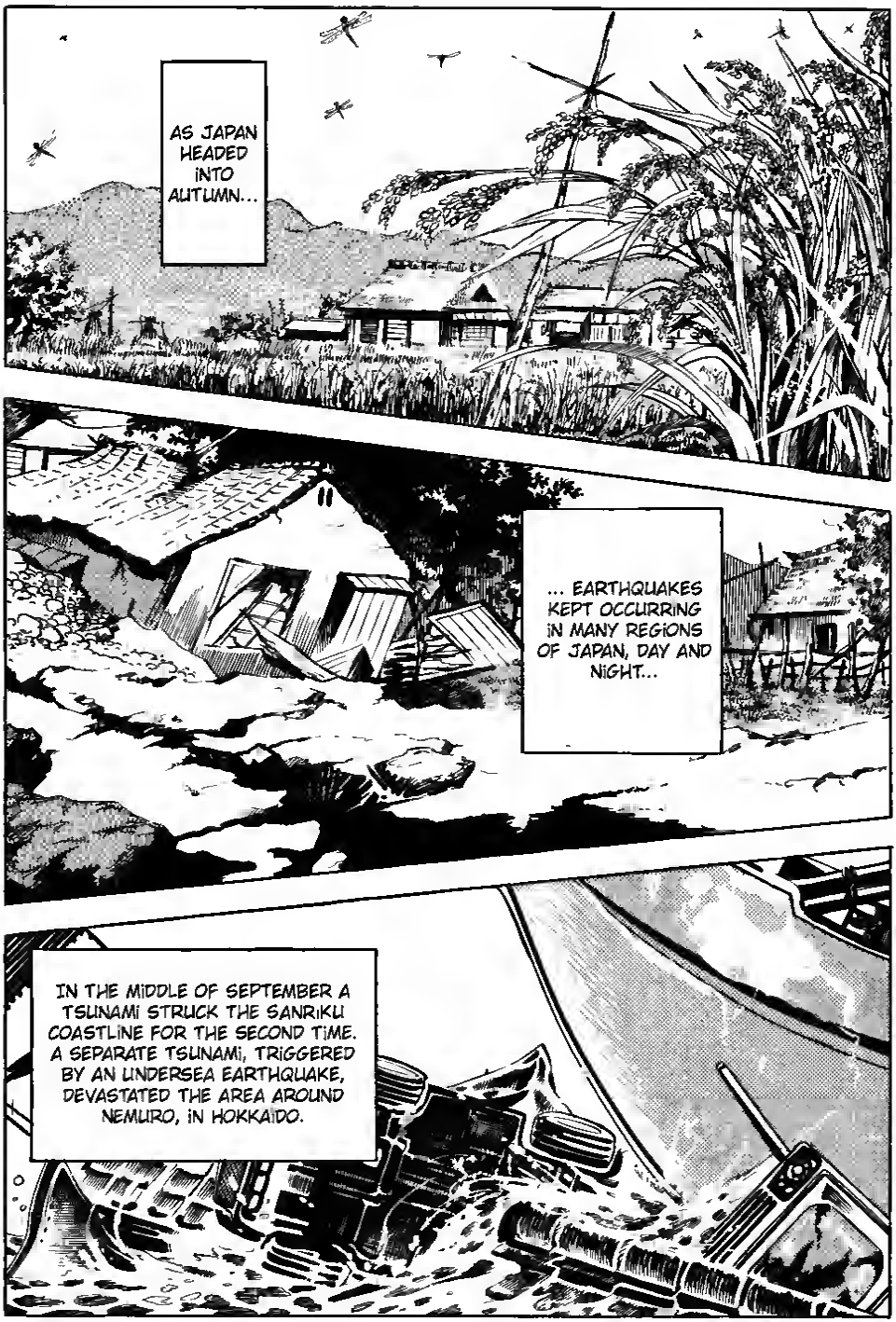
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

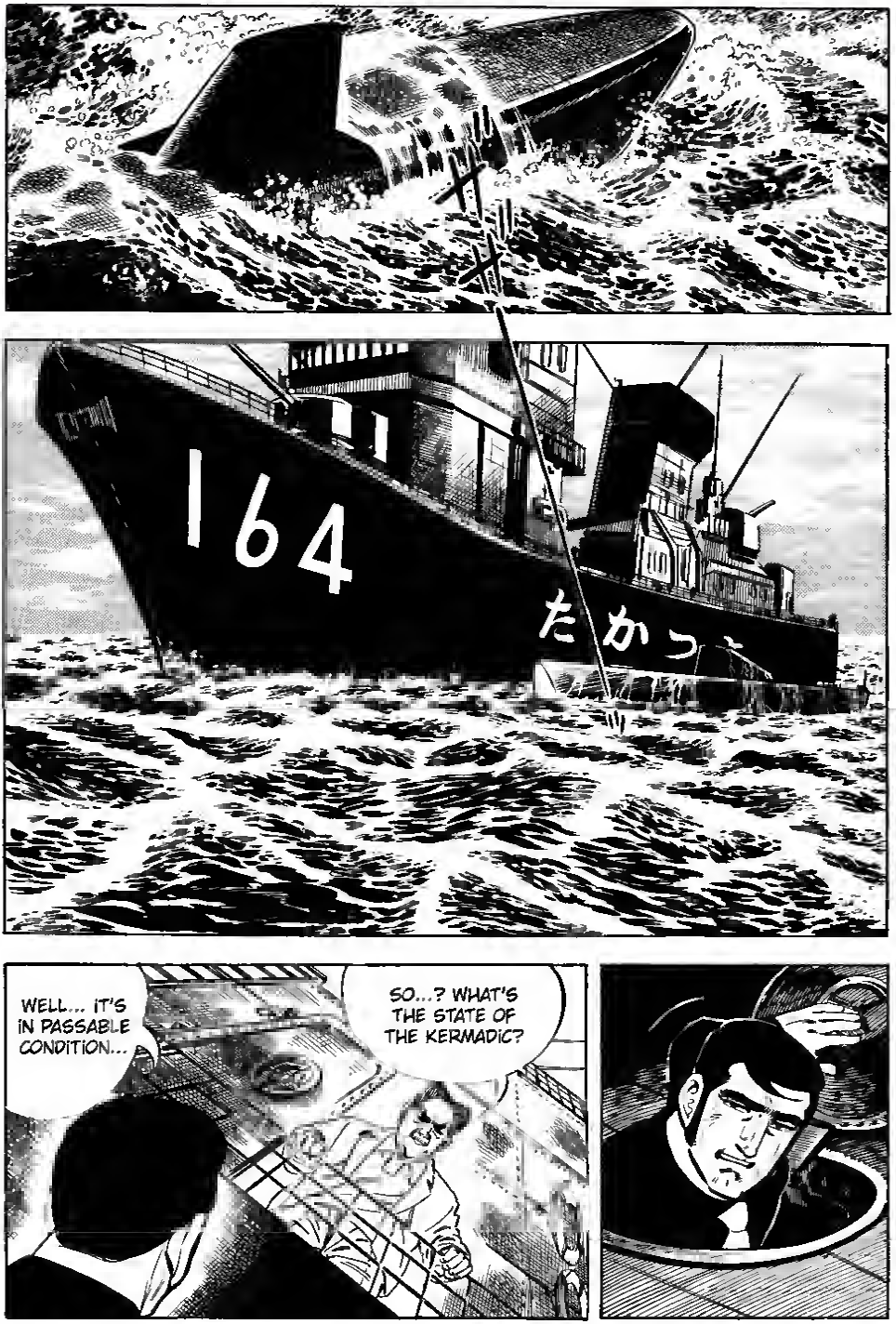

THE POINT IS NOT WHETHER IT CAN BE ACTUALLY CARRIED OUT OR NOT...
AS AN OPERATION, IT'S UTTERLY IMPRACTICABLE... BESIDES, IT'S A TOTALLY INCONCEIVABLE SCENARIO! WHAT'S THE USE?
I UNDERSTAND IT'S AN ORDER BUT... EVACUATING THE WHOLE POPULATION OF JAPAN?! ABSURD!


... LET'S SAY 10,000 TO 100, 000, AND TO EVACUATE THEM... NOW, THAT WOULD BE FEASIBLE.
ON THE OTHER HAND... IF YOU ASKED ME TO SELECT A CERTAIN NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO ARE VITAL TO JAPAN'S NATIONAL INTERESTS...
I CAN TELL YOU ALREADY THAT IT COULD NEVER BE DONE!
THAT WOULDN'T HELP.
...TO WHETHER SUCH AN OPERATION WOULD BE FEASIBLE IN THEORY.
...RATHER... I JUST WANT YOU TO GIVE SOME THOUGHT...

...
...UH? ANOTHER DAMN EARTHQUAKE...?!
...I WILL ASSUME A NUCLEAR WAR SCENARIO..
I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO.
MAYBE... I UNDERSTAND, DIRECTOR.
WE'LL CALL IT "OPERATION D-2".
I EXPECT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF SECRECY, COMMANDER.
UNDER-STOOD, SIR.


AS JAPAN HEADED INTO AUTUMN...
... EARTHQUAKES KEPT OCCURRING IN MANY REGIONS OF JAPAN, DAY AND NIGHT...
IN THE MIDDLE OF SEPTEMBER A TSUNAMI STRUCK THE SANRIKU COASTLINE FOR THE SECOND TIME. A SEPARATE TSUNAMI, TRIGGERED BY AN UNDERSEA EARTHQUAKE, DEVASTATED THE AREA AROUND NEMURO, IN HOKKAIDO.

ERUPTIONS CONTINUED IN THE KYUSHU AREA. THE SAKARAJIMA VOLCANO BECAME ACTIVE CAUSING THE METEOROLOGICAL AGENCY TO ISSUE AN OFFICIAL WARNING.
...BUT MOST PEOPLE HAD ALREADY STOPPED PAYING MUCH ATTENTION TO IT.
ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY POWERFUL EARTHQUAKES WERE OCCURRING SEVERAL HUNDRED TIMES A DAY. AS THE GROUND SHIFTED AND SHOOK, BUILDINGS WERE DAMAGED AND TWISTED BEYOND RECOGNITION.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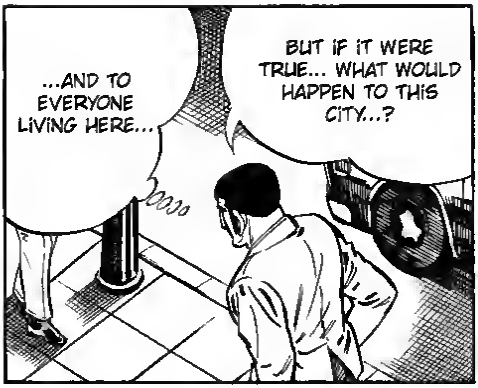
WELL... IT'S IN PASSABLE CONDITION...
SO...? WHAT'S THE STATE OF THE KERMADIC?

I'M NOT SURPRISED, FRANCE HAS A LONG HISTORY OF BUILDING DEEP-SEA SUBS.
...IN SPITE OF ITS AGE, I SEE NO REASON FOR CONCERN.
IN TERMS OF PERFORMANCE, THE WADATSUMI I WAS A FAR BETTER SUBMARINE BUT...
AND NOW... TIME TO PERFORM THE LAST DIVING TEST.

...TOGETHER WITH SOME MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WILL FORM A COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE THE CHANGE IN THE EARTH'S CRUST.
YOU SEE... MEMBERS OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION'S EARTHQUAKE PREDICTION COMMITTEE AND THE INSTITUTE OF GEO-PHYSICS...
WHAT IS IT?
I'M CONCERNED ABOUT SOME-THING...
PROFESSOR TADORO...
THE JAPAN SCIENCE COUNCIL'S DIRECTOR KNOWS ABOUT IT.
NO, BUT I HEAR THEY'RE PLOTTING SOMETHING.
HAVE THEY ALREADY STARTED?
...
...SHOULD THE PROBLEM INTENSIFY, THE SCIENCE COUNCIL OF JAPAN WILL BE FORCED TO INTERVENE.
AND ...
THAT'S ONLY TO BE EXPECTED.
...MAY SOON REALIZE ON THEIR OWN THAT SOMETHING IS AMISS.
WHAT'S MORE... ANYBODY WITH SOME KNOWLEDGE OF GEOPHYSICS, GEOCHEMISTRY, GEOLOGY OR SEISMOLOGY...

IN TODAY'S SCIENTIFIC WORLD, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO KEEP A LID ON THINGS...
AND IF JAPANESE SCIENTISTS WON'T, THEIR FOREIGN COUNTERPARTS COULD...
...NO MATTER HOW WELL YOU CONCEAL A SECRET, SOMEONE ALWAYS FINDS OUT.
IT HAPPENS ALL THE TIME IN SCIENCE...
...WHILE WE ARE AHEAD!
WE MUST HURRY AND REACH OUR GOAL...
HOW MUCH LONGER BEFORE THEY CATCH UP WITH US...?

HAVING COMPLETED A SERIES OF DIVING TESTS IN THE KUMANO SEA, ONODERA RETURNED TO TOKYO FOR ONE NIGHT BEFORE GOING BACK FOR MORE TESTS.
RURI
...CAN ANYBODY REALLY BELIEVE THAT THIS HUGE METROPOLIS, ALONG WITH THE REST OF JAPAN IS GOING TO...
...THE MOST PROSPEROUS CITY IN THE WORLD, HOME TO MORE THAN TWELVE MILLION PEOPLE...
TOKYO...


...AND TO EVERYONE LIVING HERE...
BUT IF IT WERE TRUE... WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THIS CITY...?

IT'S UNTHINKABLE THAT... JAPAN COULD SINK UNDER THE OCEAN... IT'S ABSURD!
NO WAY...

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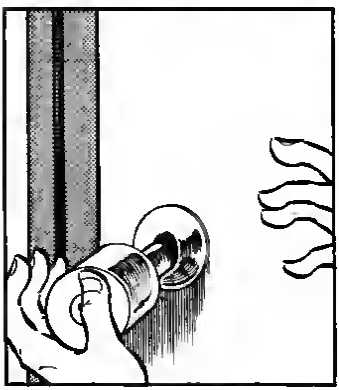
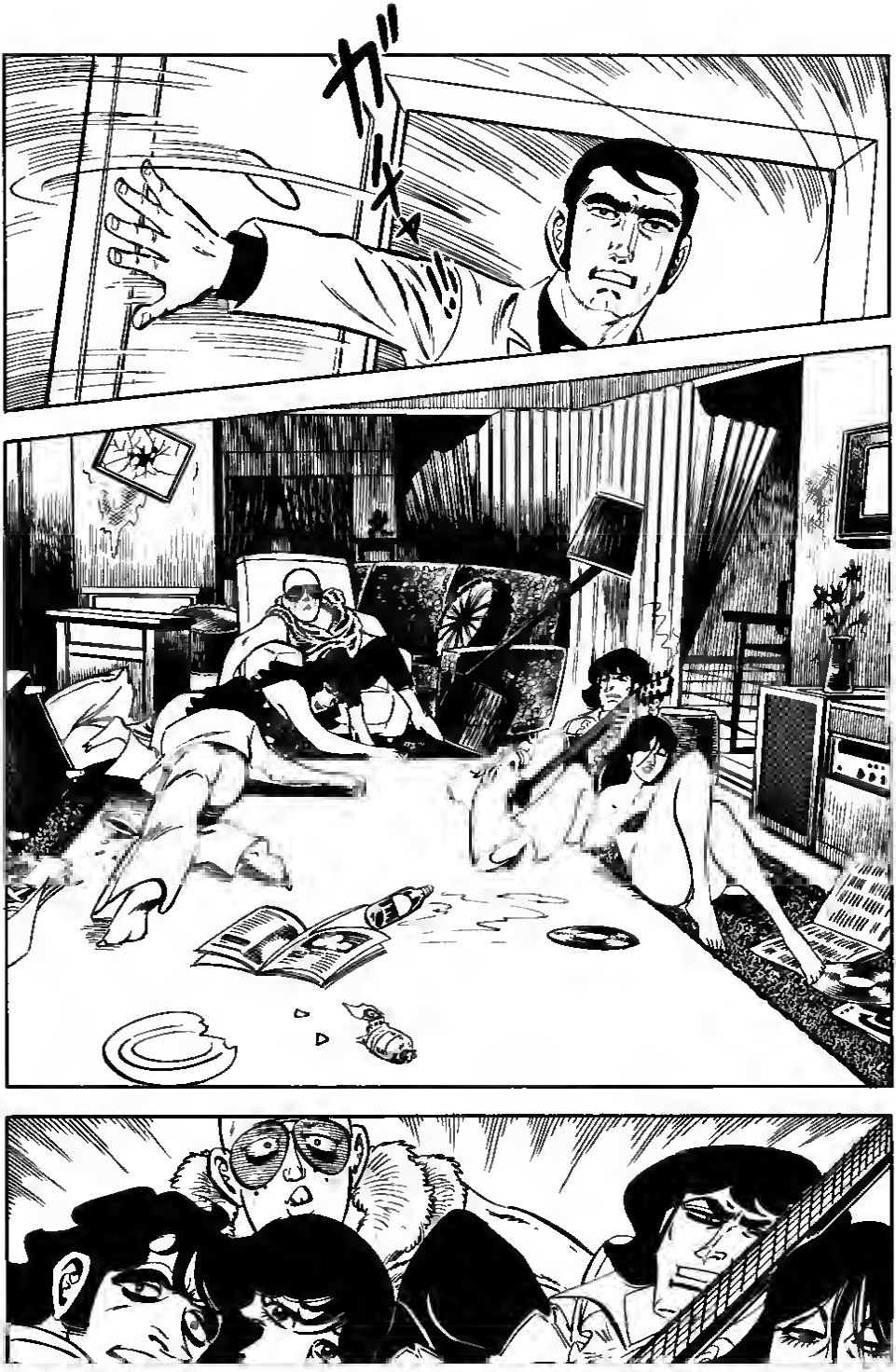
OH, WELL... I'LL DO THAT LATER.
I HAVEN'T BEEN BACK IN OVER A MONTH... I SHOULD REALLY GO AND SAY Hi TO THE CUSTODIAN...

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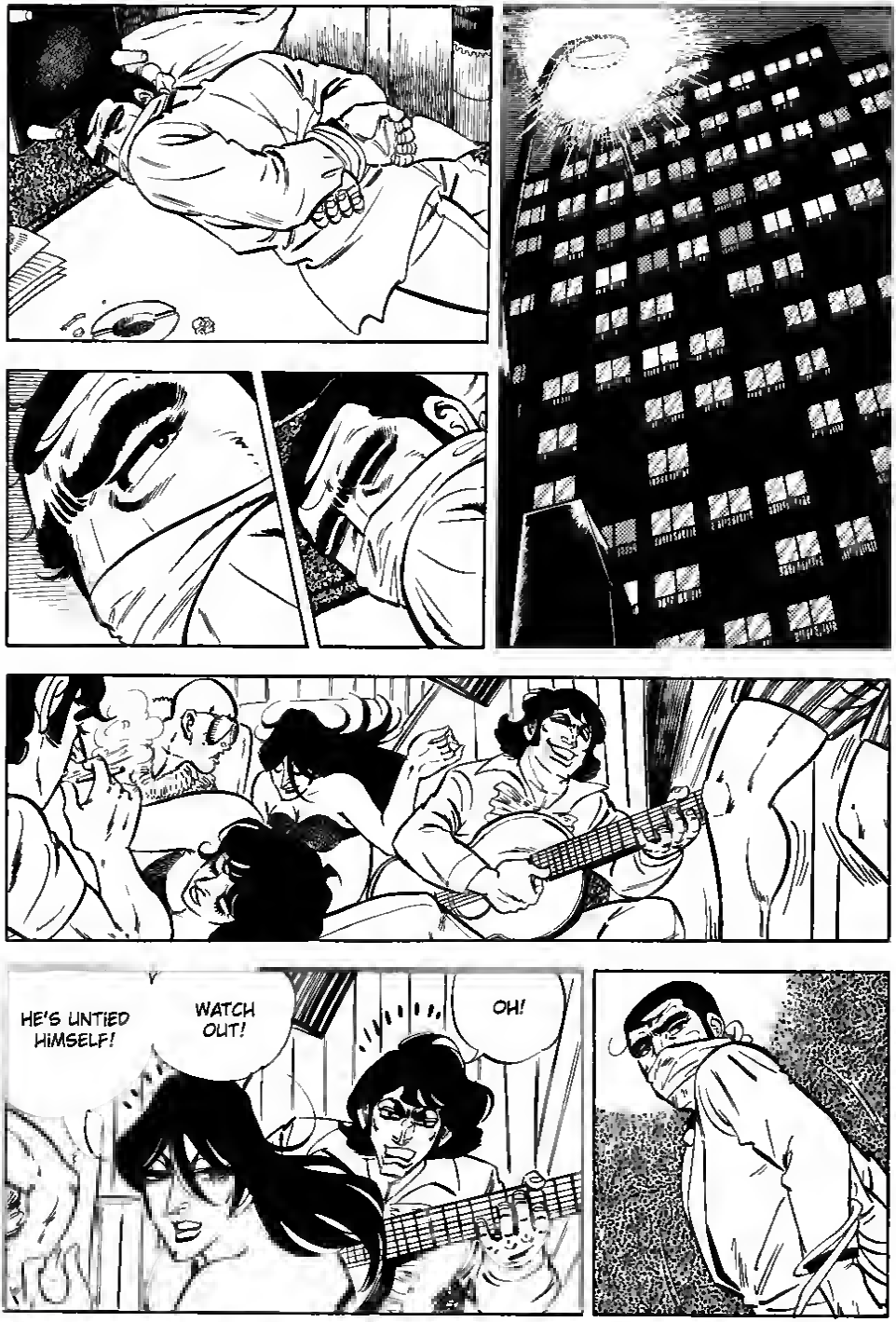
WHAT ARE YOU PEOPLE-
UNGHH!
IH, iH, iH!
AH, AH, AH!


HE'S UNTIED HIMSELF!
WATCH OUT!
OH!

YAAAH!
EAT THIS!

BASTARD!
...IS TO KEEP IT NICE AND CLEAN.
...THE LEAST YOU COULD DO...
SEE, WHEN YOU CRASH AT SOMEBODY'S PLACE...
...YOU SHOULD AT LEAST TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE.
NOW, I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO SWEEP UNDER THE TABLE BUT...

COME ON, EAT IT.
LICK IT.
I'M SURE A COCKROACH LIKE YOU KNOWS A THING OR TWO ABOUT LICKING FLOORS!
I WON'T TELL THE COPS.
SO JUST GET THE HELL OUT AND GO HAVE SOME FUN...
...WHILE YOU STILL CAN...

...
...
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LOOKS LIKE YUKI HAS TRIED TO GET IN TOUCH...
...
AT MY DAD'S COMPANY THEY' RE SAYING YOU'VE DUMPED THEM FOR A RIVAL FIRM BUT... I'M NEVER GOING TO BELIEVE THAT. TORU."
"ONODERA, AT FIRST I WAS AFRAID YOU MIGHT HAVE DIED IN THE KYOTO EARTHQUAKE... LUCKILY IT WASN'T SO.
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I... I FORGOT TO TAKE MY SHOES...
NOW WHAT...?
GO WASH YOUR FACE.
...WAIT.
THANKS...
HERE, TAKE THIS.
DID YOU RUN AWAY FROM HOME?

...JUST DON'T CAUSE OTHER PEOPLE TROUBLE.
NO HARM IN HAVING SOME FUN...
...GOOD MEMORIES ARE BETTER THAN NOTHING... WHO KNOWS ABOUT TOMORROW...
...HAVE FUN AND ENJOY THE THINGS THAT MONEY CAN'T BUY...
...THAT'S WHAT EVERYBODY NEEDS RIGHT NOW...
...GO HAVE SOME FUN...

ANOTHER... BIG ONE!
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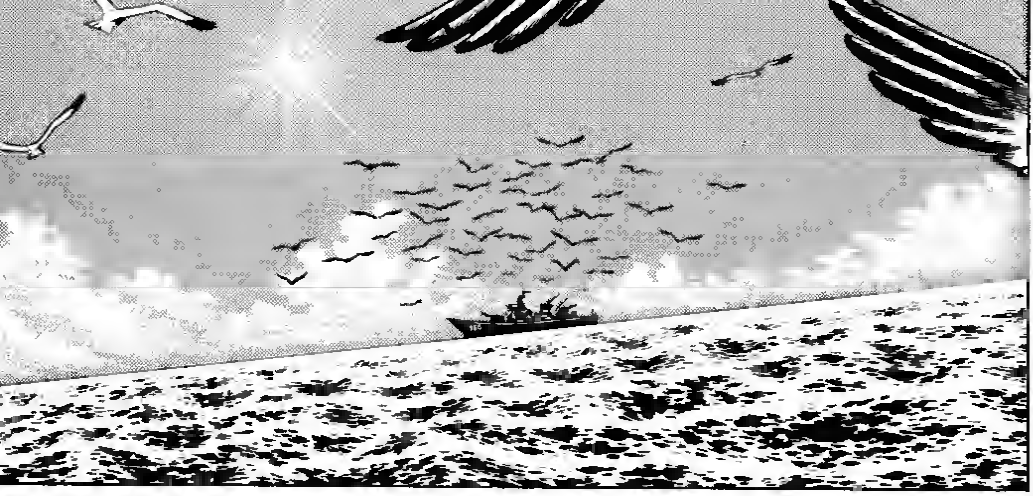
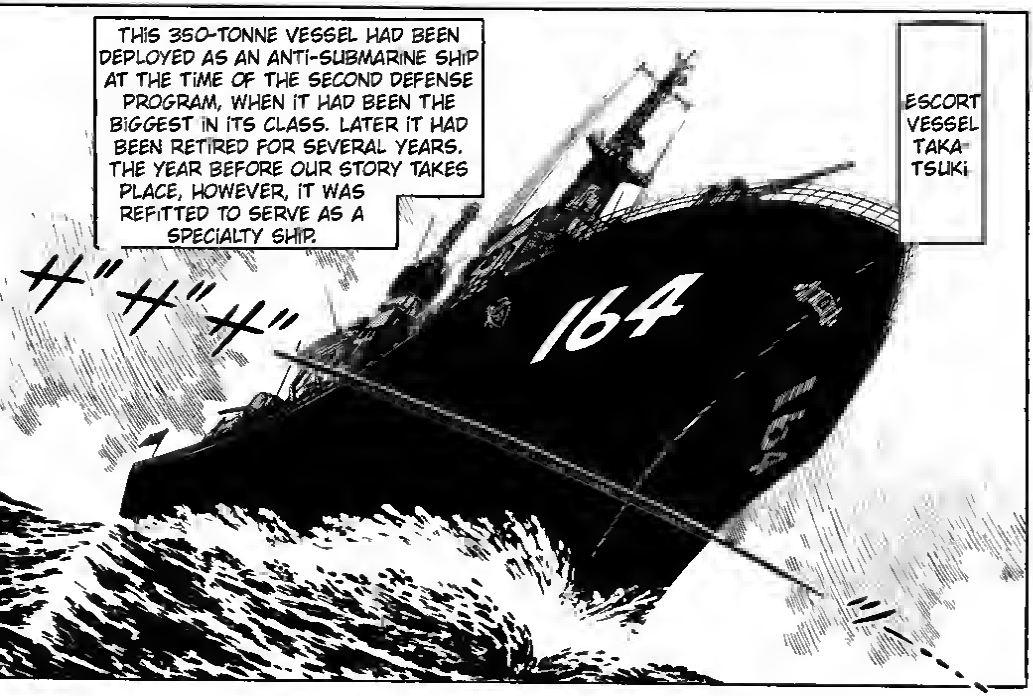
AAAH!

AHHH!
...IT'S SHAKING AGAIN!
SOMEONE HELP US!
IT LASTED A LONG TIME... WILL THERE BE AFTERSHOCKS?
IT ... IT STOPPED...




THIS 350-TONNE VESSEL HAD BEEN DEPLOYED AS AN ANTI-SUBMARINE SHIP AT THE TIME OF THE SECOND DEFENSE PROGRAM, WHEN IT HAD BEEN THE BIGGEST IN ITS CLASS. LATER IT HAD BEEN RETIRED FOR SEVERAL YEARS. THE YEAR BEFORE OUR STORY TAKES PLACE, HOWEVER, IT WAS REFITTED TO SERVE AS A SPECIALTY SHIP.
ESCORT VESSEL TAKA-TSUKI
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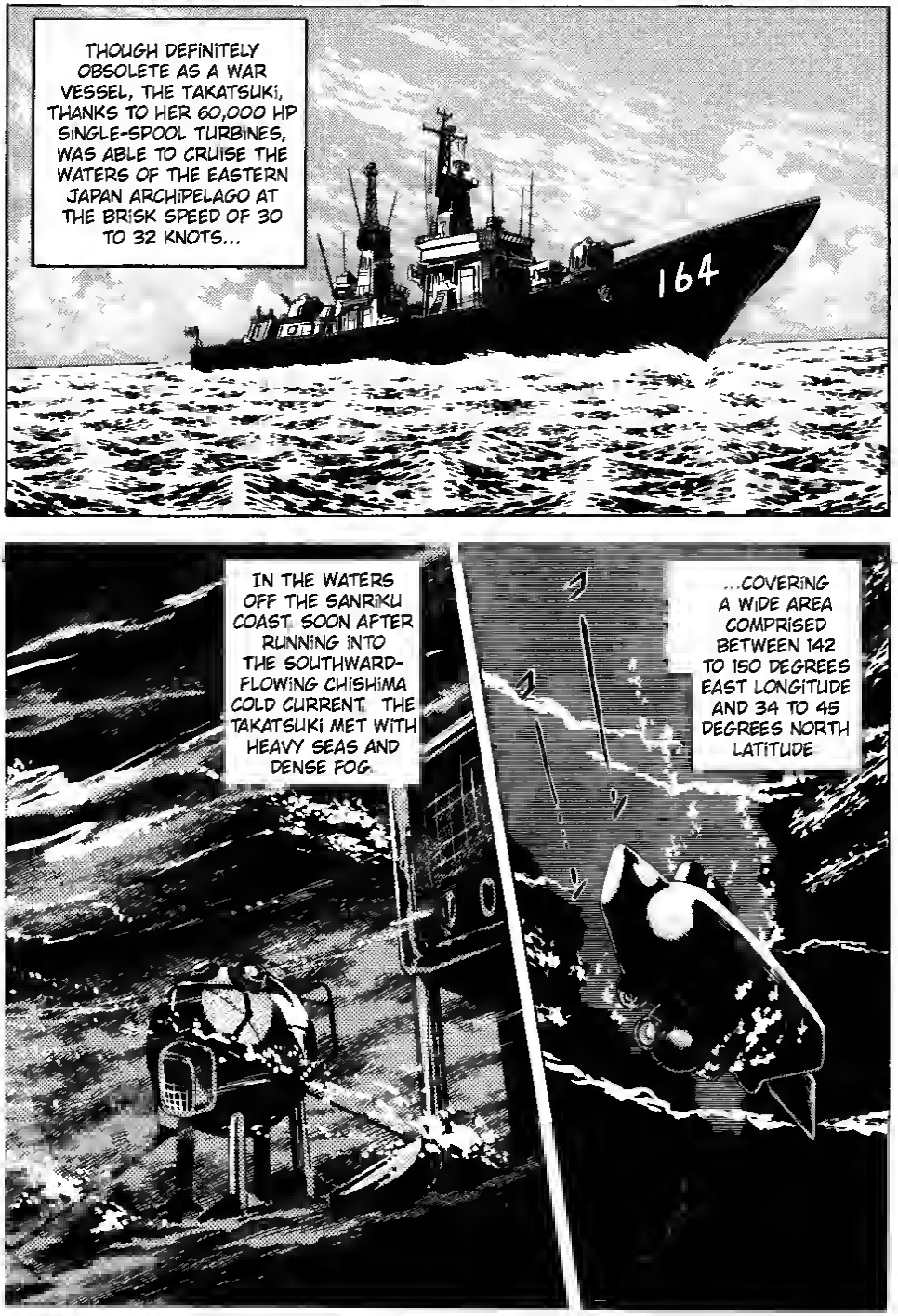
...AND TWO LONG RAILS HAD BEEN FITTED ON ITS BROAD DECK TO SECURE THE KERMADIC.
WHILE ITS FRONT AND REAR 5-INCH GUNS HAD BEEN LEFT IN PLACE, ITS DEPTH-CHARGE RACKS AND ASROC ANTI-SUBMARINE ROCKET LAUNCH PADS HAD BEEN REMOVED...


THOUGH DEFINITELY OBSOLETE AS A WAR VESSEL, THE TAKATSUKI, THANKS TO HER 60,000 HP SINGLE-SPOOL TURBINES, WAS ABLE TO CRUISE THE WATERS OF THE EASTERN JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO AT THE BRISK SPEED OF 30 TO 32 KNOTS...
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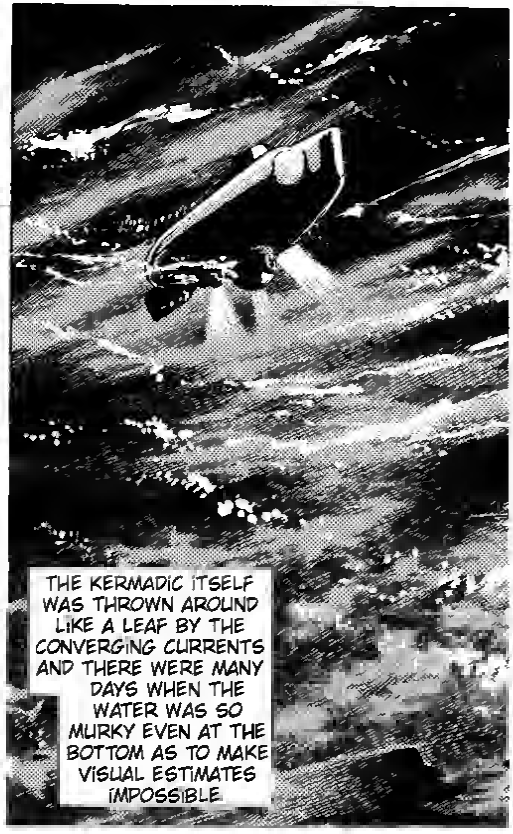
IN THE WATERS OFF THE SANRIKU COAST SOON AFTER RUNNING INTO THE SOUTHWARD-FLOWING CHISHIMA COLD CURRENT, THE TAKATSUKI MET WITH HEAVY SEAS AND DENSE FOG.
...COVERING A WIDE AREA COMPRISED BETWEEN 142 TO 150 DEGREES EAST LONGITUDE AND 34 TO 45 DEGREES NORTH LATITUDE

FOLLOWING PROFESSOR TADORO'S INSTRUCTIONS, THE SHIP DROPPED THE KERMADIC IN VARIOUS SPOTS ALONG THE SLOPE OF THE JAPAN TRENCH, KEEPING TO A DEMANDING SCHEDULE OF TWENTY DIVES IN TWO WEEKS.

FROM TIME TO TIME, SOVIET PATROL BOATS COULD BE SPOTTED SUSPICIOUSLY PLYING THE WATERS AROUND THEM.


THE KERMADIC ITSELF WAS THROWN AROUND LIKE A LEAF BY THE CONVERGING CURRENTS AND THERE WERE MANY DAYS WHEN THE WATER WAS SO MURKY EVEN AT THE BOTTOM AS TO MAKE VISUAL ESTIMATES IMPOSSIBLE

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...WHAT'S WRONG?
D-DAMN!
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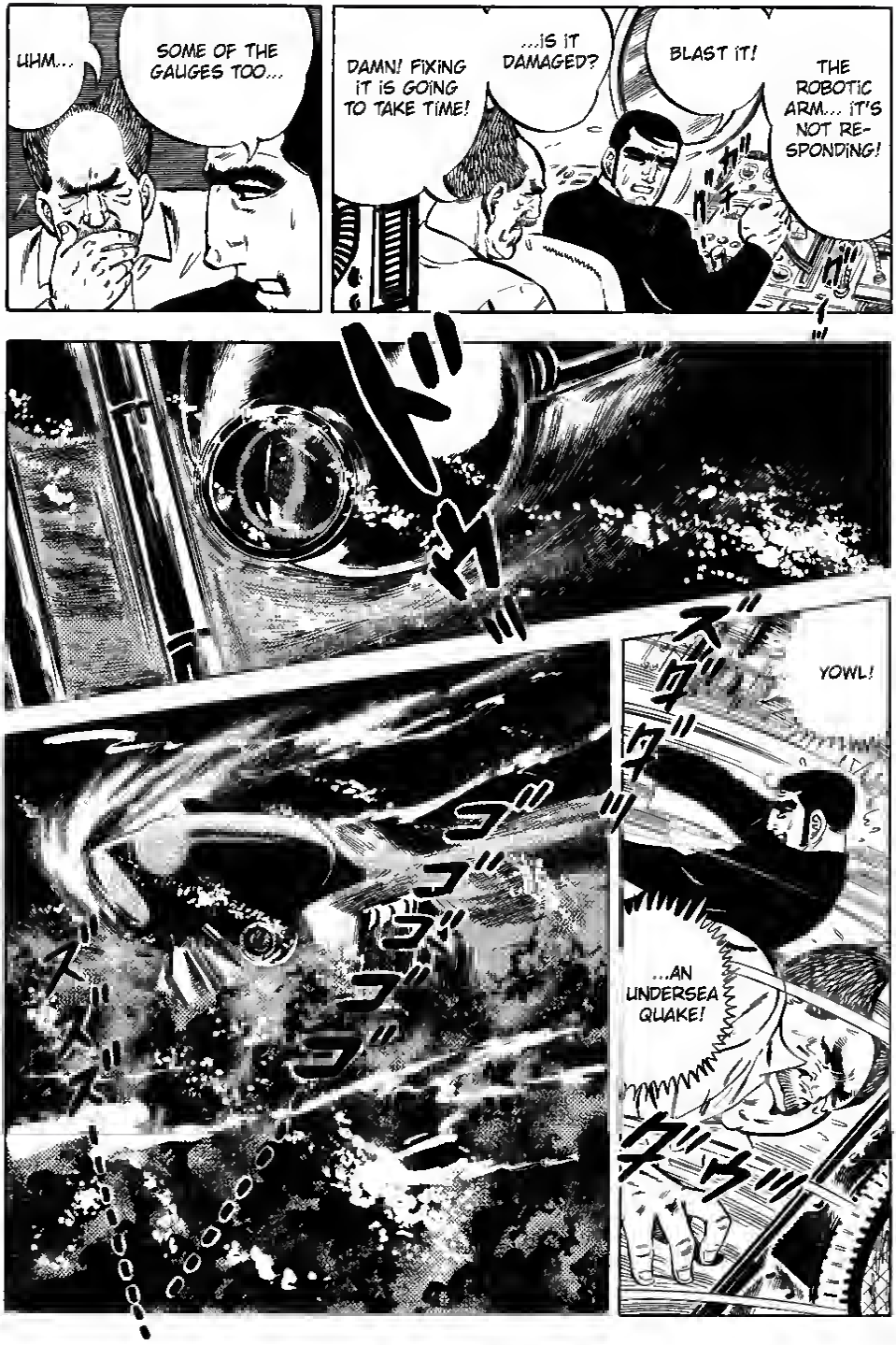
UHM...
SOME OF THE GAUGES TOO...
DAMN! FIXING IT IS GOING TO TAKE TIME!
...IS IT DAMAGED?
BLAST IT!
THE ROBOTIC ARM... IT'S NOT RESPONDING!
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YOWL!
...AN UNDERSEA QUAKE!
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ゴオオオオ…!!
ARE YOU OKAY, PROFESSOR TADORO?
YEAH... OKAY...
...I'M USED TO UNDERSEA QUAKES BY NOW...
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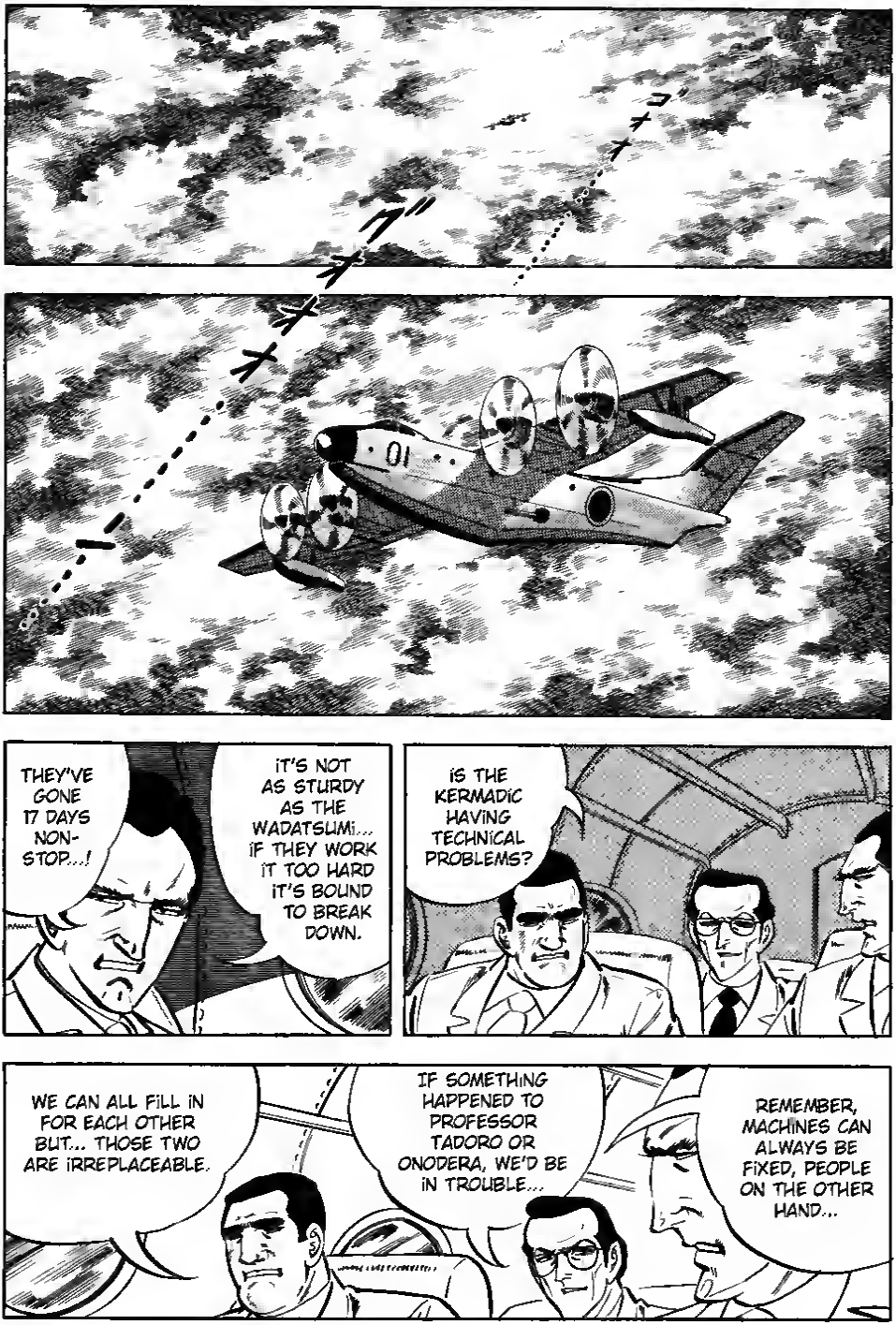
NO POINT IN HANGING AROUND...
LOOK AT ALL THAT MUD...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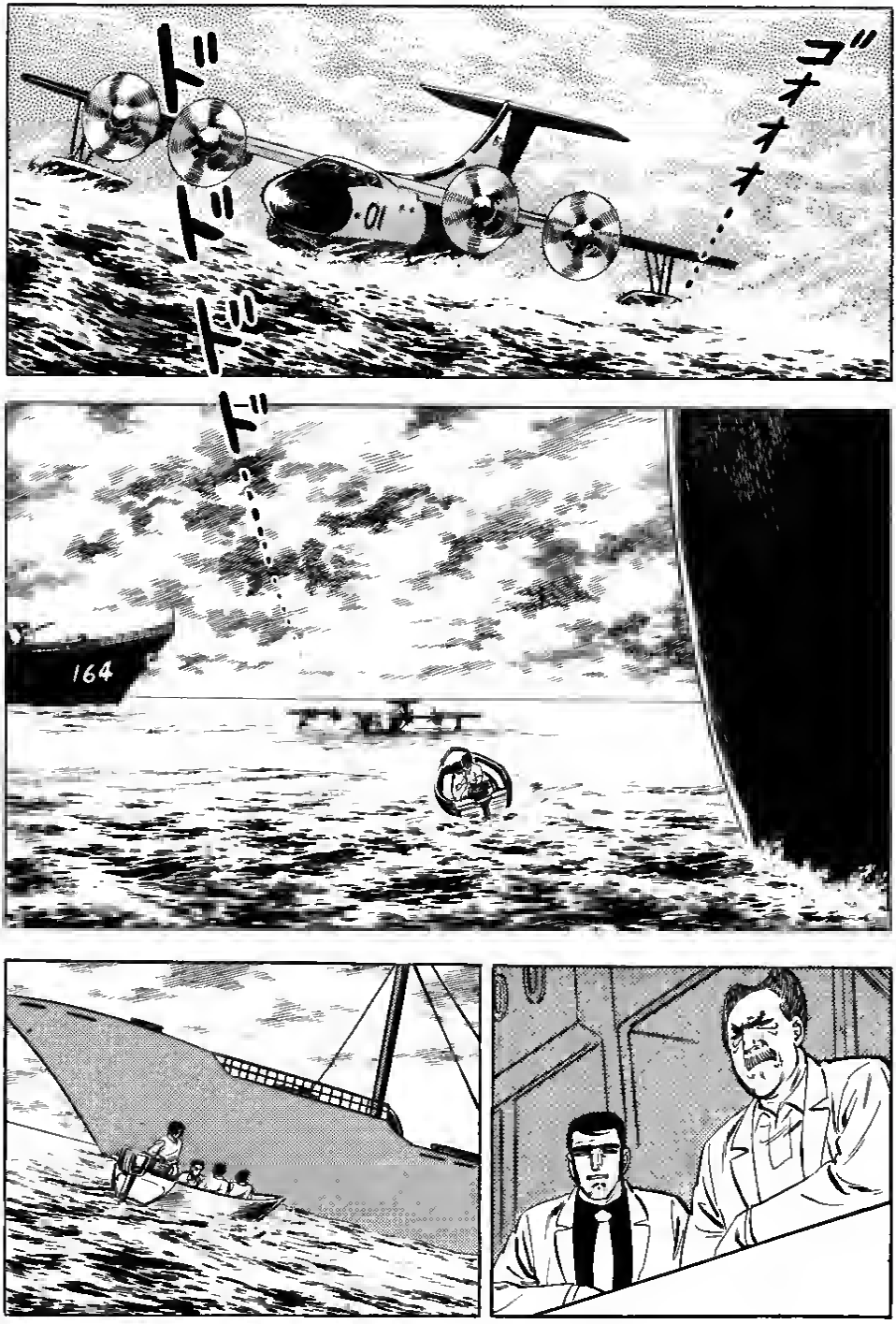
THEY'VE GONE 17 DAYS NON-STOP...!
IT'S NOT AS STURDY AS THE WADATSUMI... IF THEY WORK IT TOO HARD IT'S BOUND TO BREAK DOWN.
IS THE KERMADIC HAVING TECHNICAL PROBLEMS?
WE CAN ALL FILL IN FOR EACH OTHER BUT... THOSE TWO ARE IRREPLACEABLE.
IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO PROFESSOR TADORO OR ONODERA, WE'D BE IN TROUBLE...
REMEMBER, MACHINES CAN ALWAYS BE FIXED, PEOPLE ON THE OTHER HAND...

DOES THE PROFESSOR KNOW THAT THE GEODESIC COMMISSION AND THE METEOROLOGICAL AGENCY ARE GETTING READY TO STEP IN?
...AND NOW THAT THE KERMADIC IS OUT OF ORDER FOR A WHILE...
WE STILL LACK SUFFICIENT DATA...
BY THE WAY... WHAT'S THE CONCLU-SION SO FAR?
ゲオオオ
HE WAS KICKING THE KERMADIC AND YELLING AT THE REPAIR TEAM THAT HE WANTS HER READY IN THREE DAYS!
HE DOES... AND THAT'S DRIVING HIM OUT OF HIS MIND.
OH! THERE SHE IS!
...THE YOSHINO, THE SPECIAL COVERT-OPERATION SHIP.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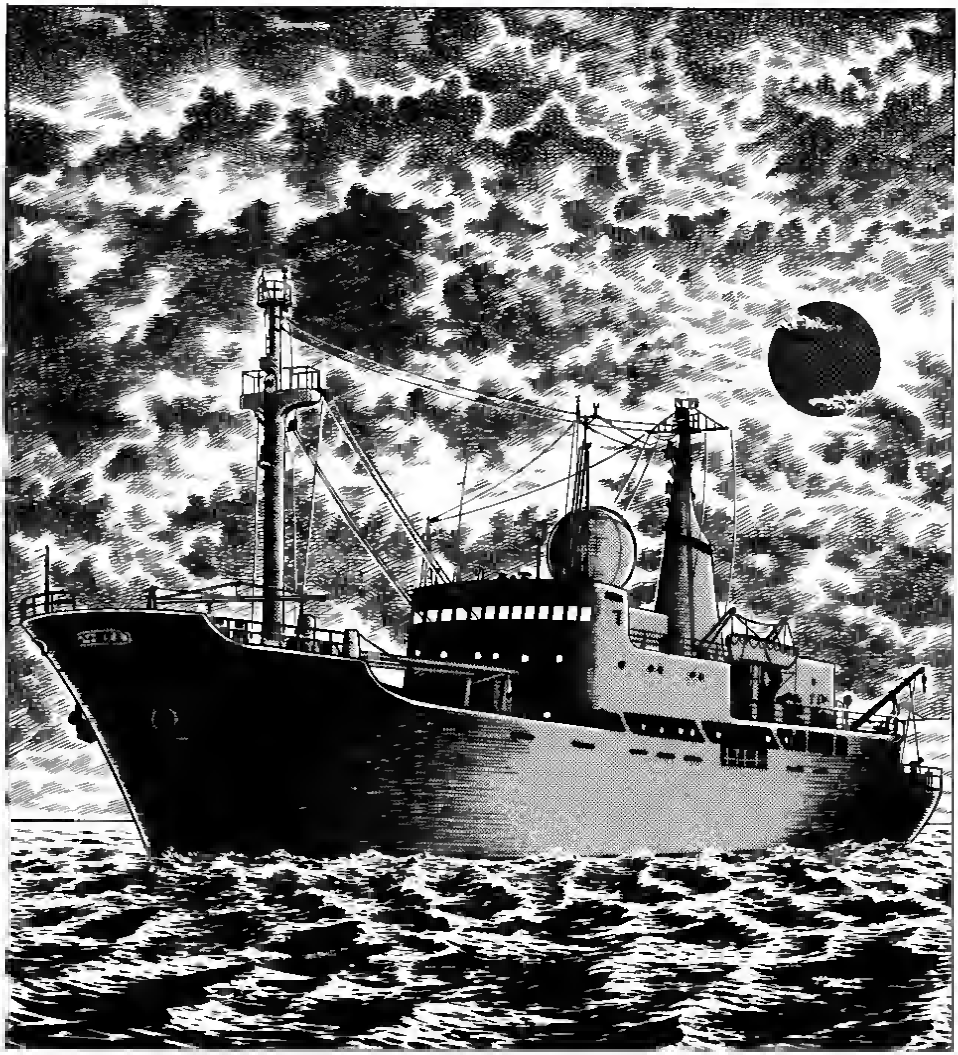
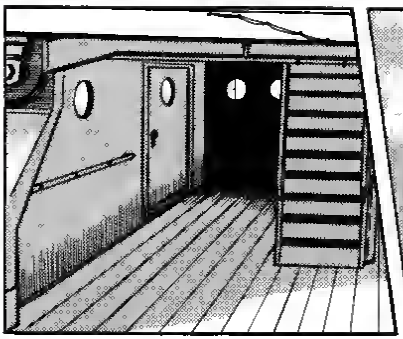
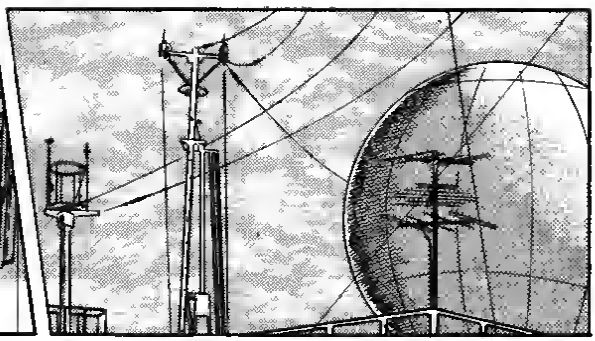
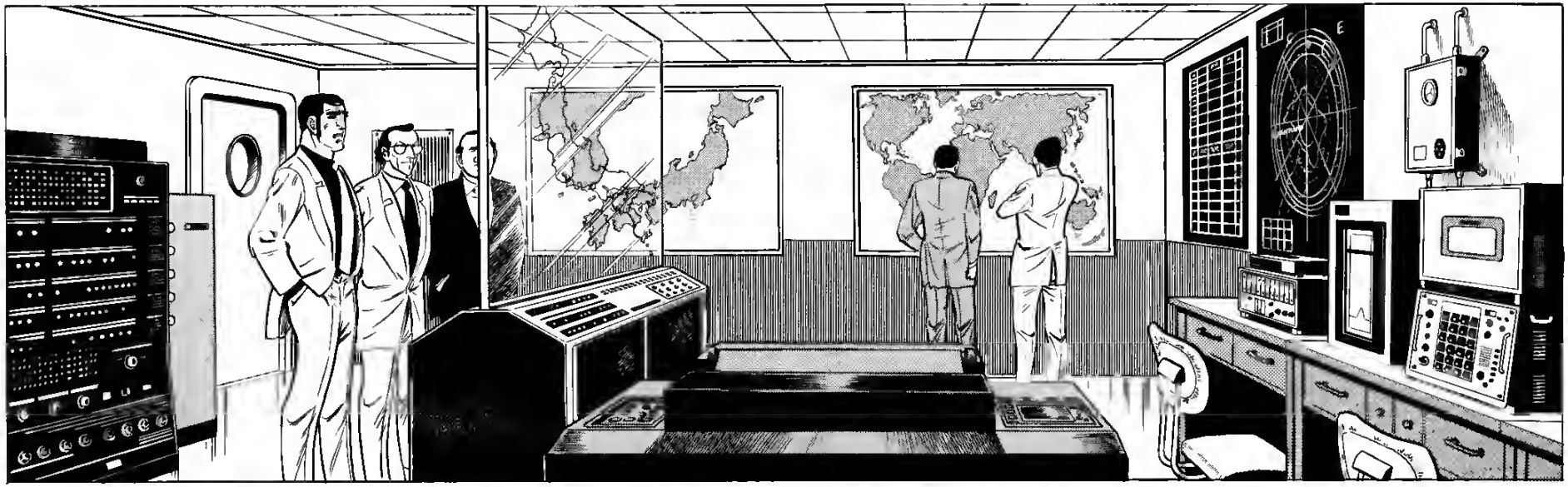
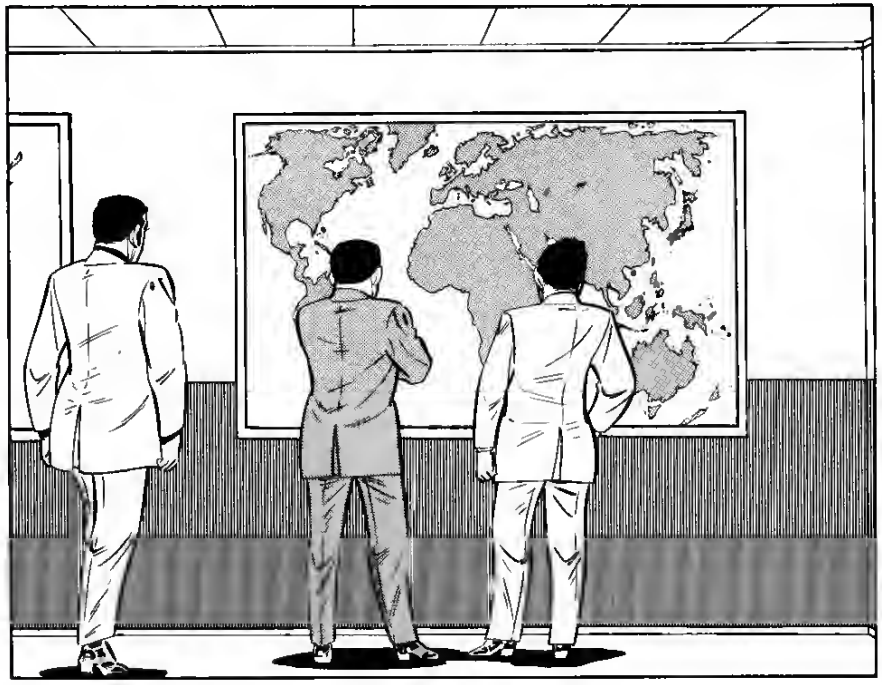
YAMAZAKI IS COMING BY COURIER PLANE...
PROFESSOR TADORO... YOU SEEM UPSET ABOUT SOMETHING.
IN HAKO-NE...?
THERE ARE SIGNS OF AN ERUPTION IN HAKONE!
PROFESSOR TADORO!
I WANT EVERYONE IN THE COMMAND ROOM.
THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO DISCUSS WITH ALL OF YOU.
...ALREADY BEGUN...?
HAS IT...
...
THE TAKATSUKI IS TO HEAD TO MIYAKEJIMA IMMEDIATELY.
THEY SAY RUMBLINGS CAN BE HEARD IN MIYAKEJIMA TOO.

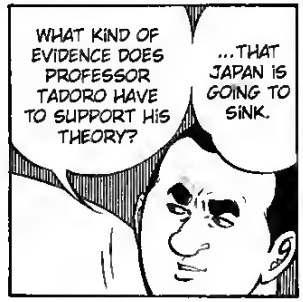






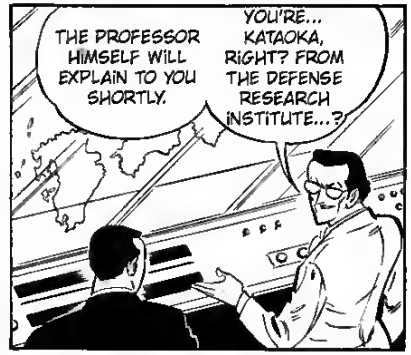





WHAT KIND OF EVIDENCE DOES PROFESSOR TADORO HAVE TO SUPPORT HIS THEORY?
...THAT JAPAN IS GOING TO SINK.

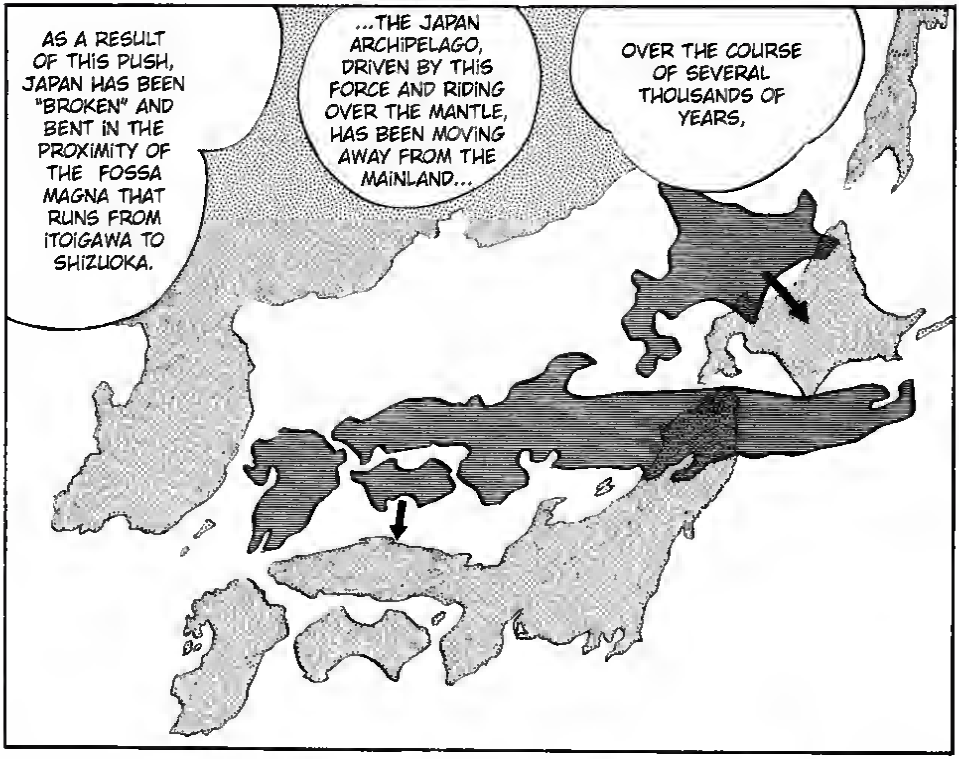
I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE...

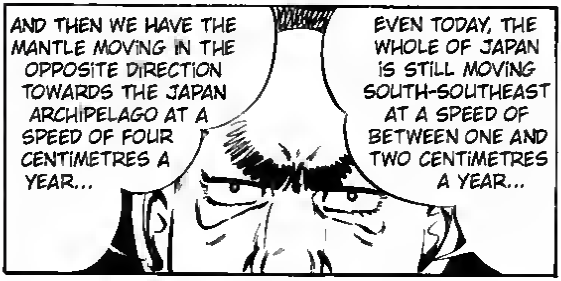
IT'S HARD TO SAY...
BUT... COULD SUCH A THING REALLY HAPPEN, PROFESSOR YUKINAGA?

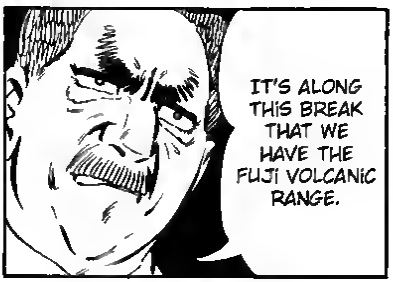

THE PROFESSOR HIMSELF WILL EXPLAIN TO YOU SHORTLY.
YOU'RE... KATAOKA, RIGHT? FROM THE DEFENSE RESEARCH INSTITUTE...?

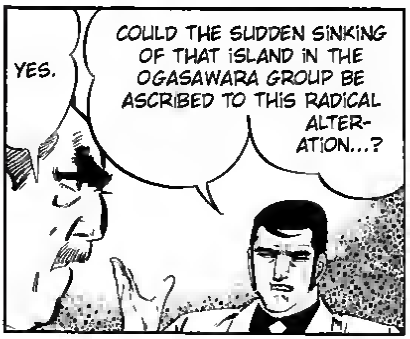
IT'S NOT AT ALL UNCOMMON FOR MOUNTAIN CHAINS TO STRETCH ALONG THE OCEAN FLOOR FOR THOUSANDS OF KILOMETRES...
I HAD NO IDEA THE BOTTOM OF THE ATLANTIC WAS SO... WRINKLY!
...LOOK AT THAT!
ARE ALL THOSE MOUNTAINS A RESULT OF... MANTLE CONVECTION?
カシュ
ESPECIALLY IN THIS REGION... IF YOU TOOK AWAY ALL THE WATER YOU'D THINK WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF AN ALPINE REGION.
BISMARCK ISLANDS
MELANESIA
NEW GUINEA
HOW... BIZARRE.
THAT'S RIGHT, THE EARTH IS A LARGE LIVING ENTITY...
I SEE. PLEASE SIT DOWN, EVERYONE.
WITH THE EXCEPTION OF YAMAZAKI, ALL THE MEMBERS OF D-1 ARE HERE, PROFESSOR TADORO.
カ"
チ"

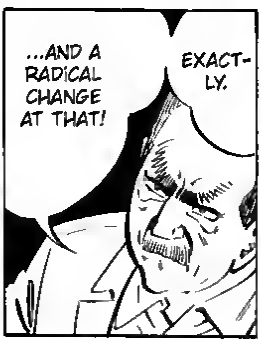
...IS THE EVIDENCE OF A PRECIPITOUS CHANGE IN THE FLOW OF THE MANTLE UNDER THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO.
WHAT I'D LIKE TO GO OVER WITH YOU NEXT...
WITH A METEOROLOGICAL ANALOGY, WE COULD SAY THAT THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO SITS ON A LINE OF DISCONTINUITY' THE MANTLE CURRENT.
...AND THAT THE JAPAN TRENCH SITS ON THE DESCENDING PART OF ONE OF THESE CURRENTS.
JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO
JAPAN TRENCH
YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT THE MANTLE, THOUGH CONSIDERED SOLID, MOVES WITH A SLOW, CREEPING MOTION CAUSED BY CONVECTION CURRENTS...
JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO
JAPAN SEA
PACIFIC OCEAN
JAPAN TRENCH
MANTLE
...WHILE IT'S BEING PUSHED UP AT THE SAME TIME OVER THE ADVANCING MANTLE BY A FORCE RESULTING FROM THE UPWELLING OF THE MANTLE ON THE CONTINENTAL SIDE... AS I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU.
THE PACIFIC COASTLINE IS BEING PULLED DOWNWARD BY THE DESCENDING CURRENT...

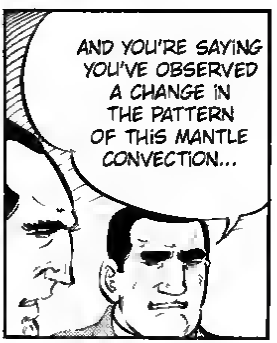

AS A RESULT OF THIS PUSH, JAPAN HAS BEEN "BROKEN" AND BENT IN THE PROXIMITY OF THE FOSSA MAGNA THAT RUNS FROM ITOIGAWA TO SHIZUOKA.
...THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO, DRIVEN BY THIS FORCE AND RIDING OVER THE MANTLE, HAS BEEN MOVING AWAY FROM THE MAINLAND...
OVER THE COURSE OF SEVERAL THOUSANDS OF YEARS,

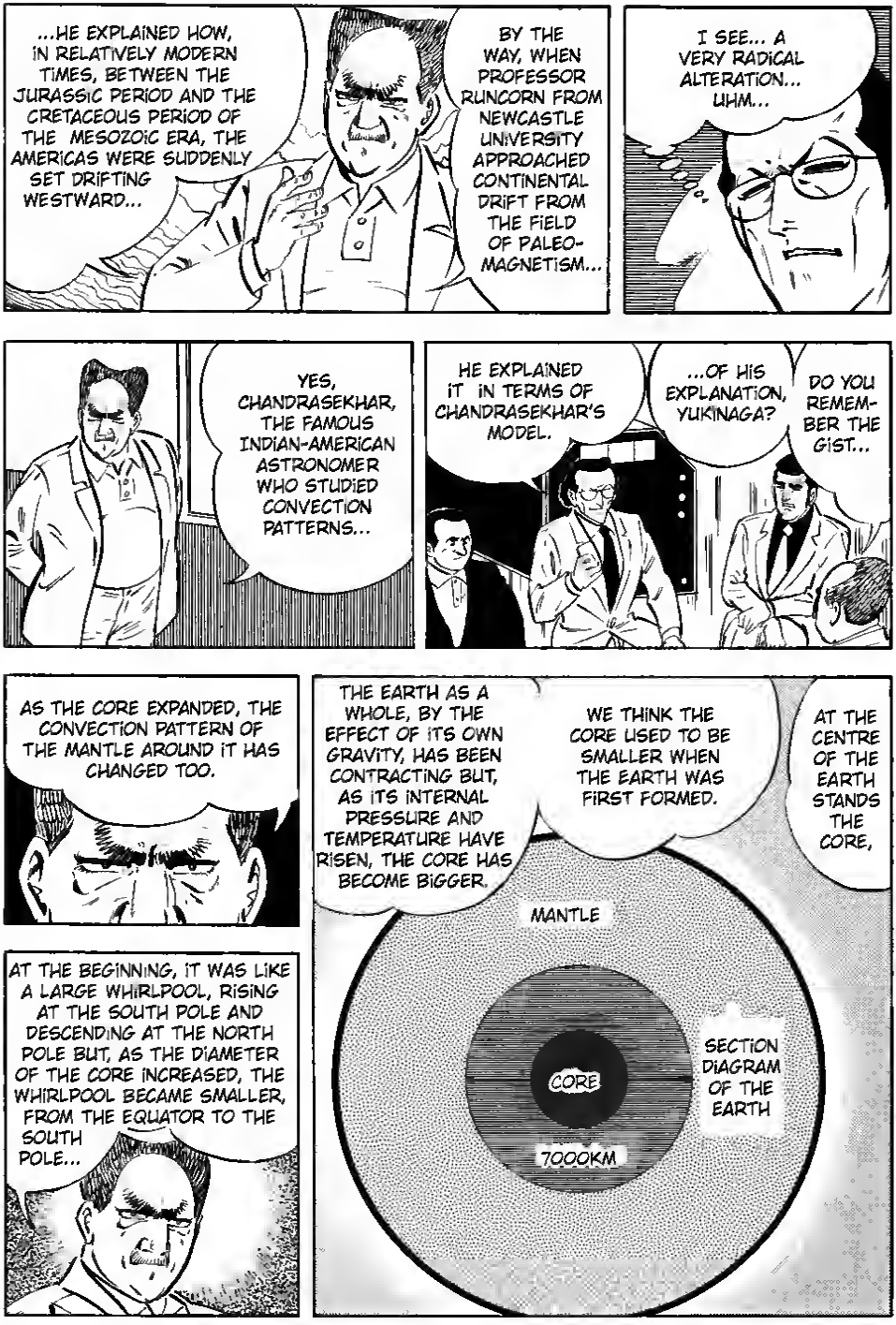

AND THEN WE HAVE THE MANTLE MOVING IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION TOWARDS THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO AT A SPEED OF FOUR CENTIMETRES A YEAR...
EVEN TODAY, THE WHOLE OF JAPAN IS STILL MOVING SOUTH-SOUTHEAST AT A SPEED OF BETWEEN ONE AND TWO CENTIMETRES A YEAR...

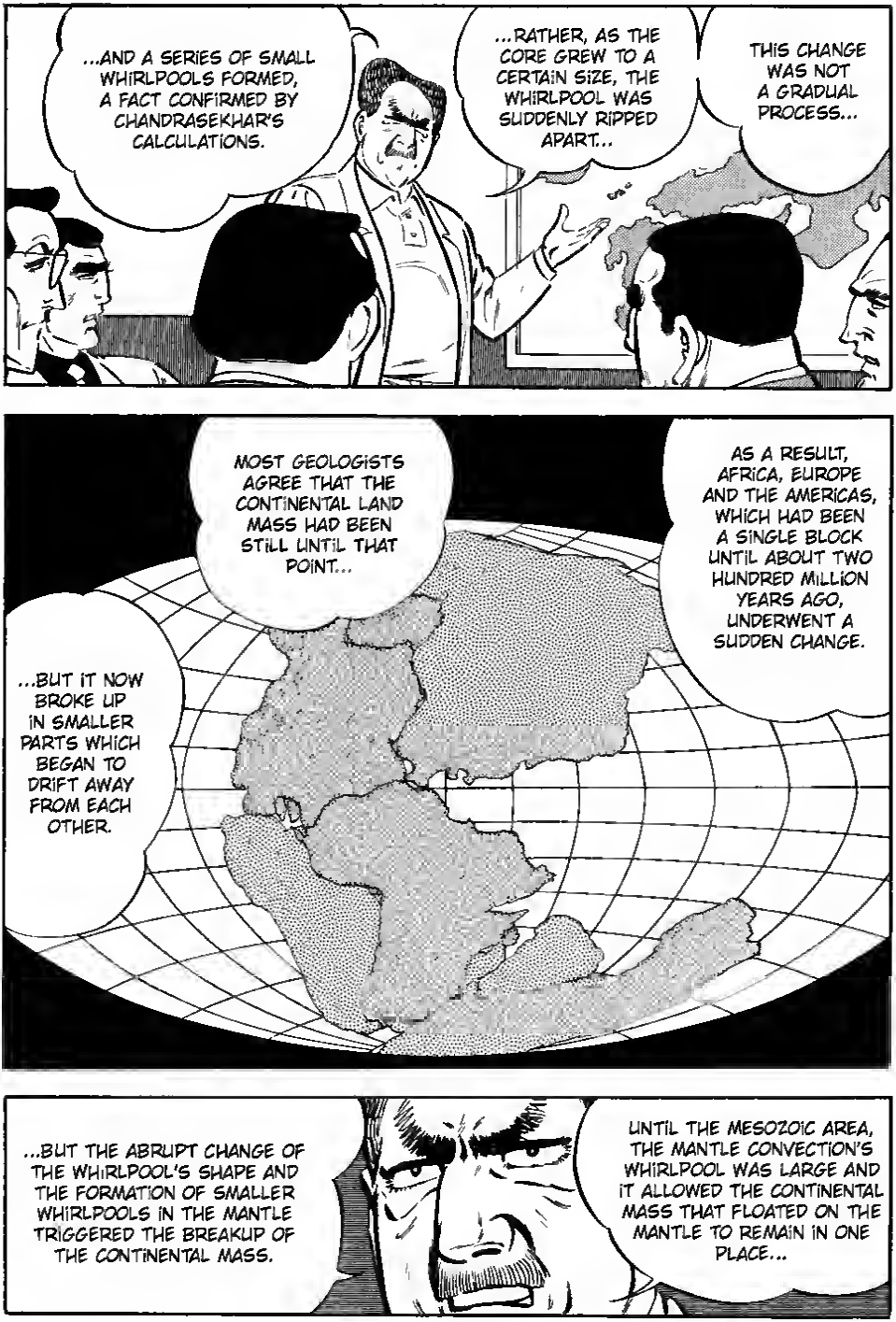

IT'S ALONG THIS BREAK THAT WE HAVE THE FUJI VOLCANIC RANGE.

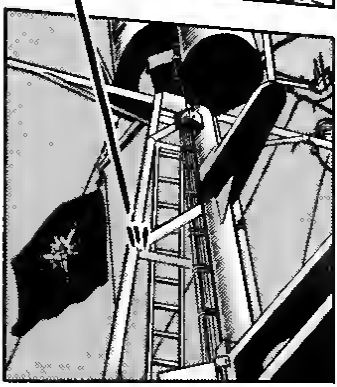

YES.
COULD THE SUDDEN SINKING OF THAT ISLAND IN THE OGASAWARA GROUP BE ASCRIBED TO THIS RADICAL ALTER-ATION...?

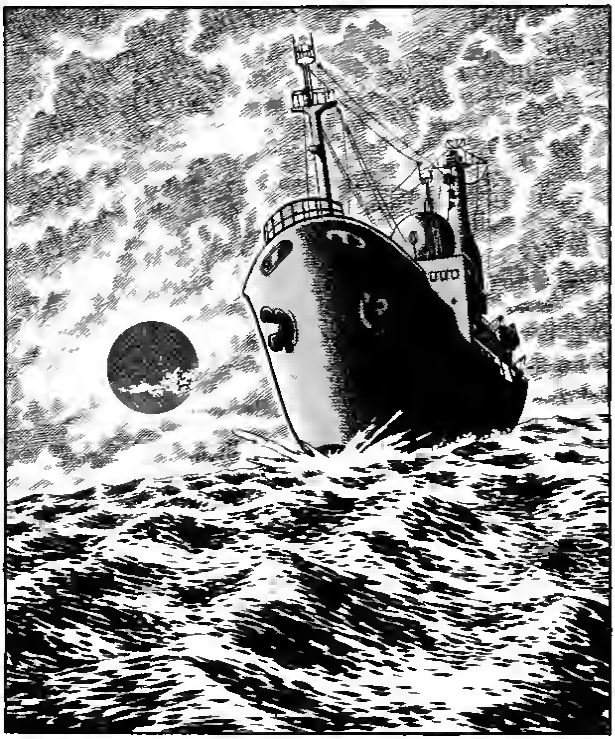

...AND A RADICAL CHANGE AT THAT!
EXACT-LY.

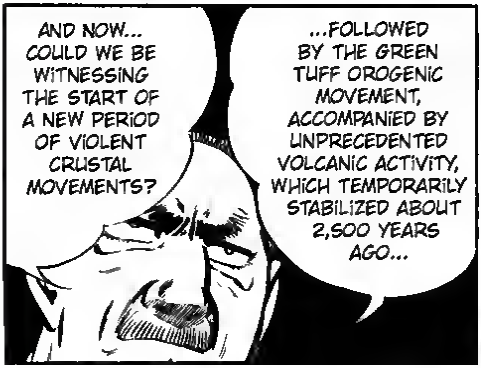

AND YOU'RE SAYING YOU'VE OBSERVED A CHANGE IN THE PATTERN OF THIS MANTLE CONVECTION...


...HE EXPLAINED HOW, IN RELATIVELY MODERN TIMES, BETWEEN THE JURASSIC PERIOD AND THE CRETACEOUS PERIOD OF THE MESOZOIC ERA, THE AMERICAS WERE SUDDENLY SET DRIFTING WESTWARD...
BY THE WAY, WHEN PROFESSOR RUNCORN FROM NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY APPROACHED CONTINENTAL DRIFT FROM THE FIELD OF PALEO-MAGNETISM...
I SEE... A VERY RADICAL ALTERATION... UHM...
YES, CHANDRASEKHAR, THE FAMOUS INDIAN-AMERICAN ASTRONOMER WHO STUDIED CONVECTION PATTERNS...
HE EXPLAINED IT IN TERMS OF CHANDRASEKHAR'S MODEL.
...OF HIS EXPLANATION, YUKINAGA?
DO YOU REMEMBER THE GIST...
AS THE CORE EXPANDED, THE CONVECTION PATTERN OF THE MANTLE AROUND IT HAS CHANGED TOO.
AT THE BEGINNING, IT WAS LIKE A LARGE WHIRLPOOL, RISING AT THE SOUTH POLE AND DESCENDING AT THE NORTH POLE BUT, AS THE DIAMETER OF THE CORE INCREASED, THE WHIRLPOOL BECAME SMALLER, FROM THE EQUATOR TO THE SOUTH POLE...
THE EARTH AS A WHOLE, BY THE EFFECT OF ITS OWN GRAVITY, HAS BEEN CONTRACTING BUT, AS ITS INTERNAL PRESSURE AND TEMPERATURE HAVE RISEN, THE CORE HAS BECOME BIGGER.
WE THINK THE CORE USED TO BE SMALLER WHEN THE EARTH WAS FIRST FORMED.
AT THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH STANDS THE CORE,
MANTLE
CORE
7000KM
SECTION DIAGRAM OF THE EARTH

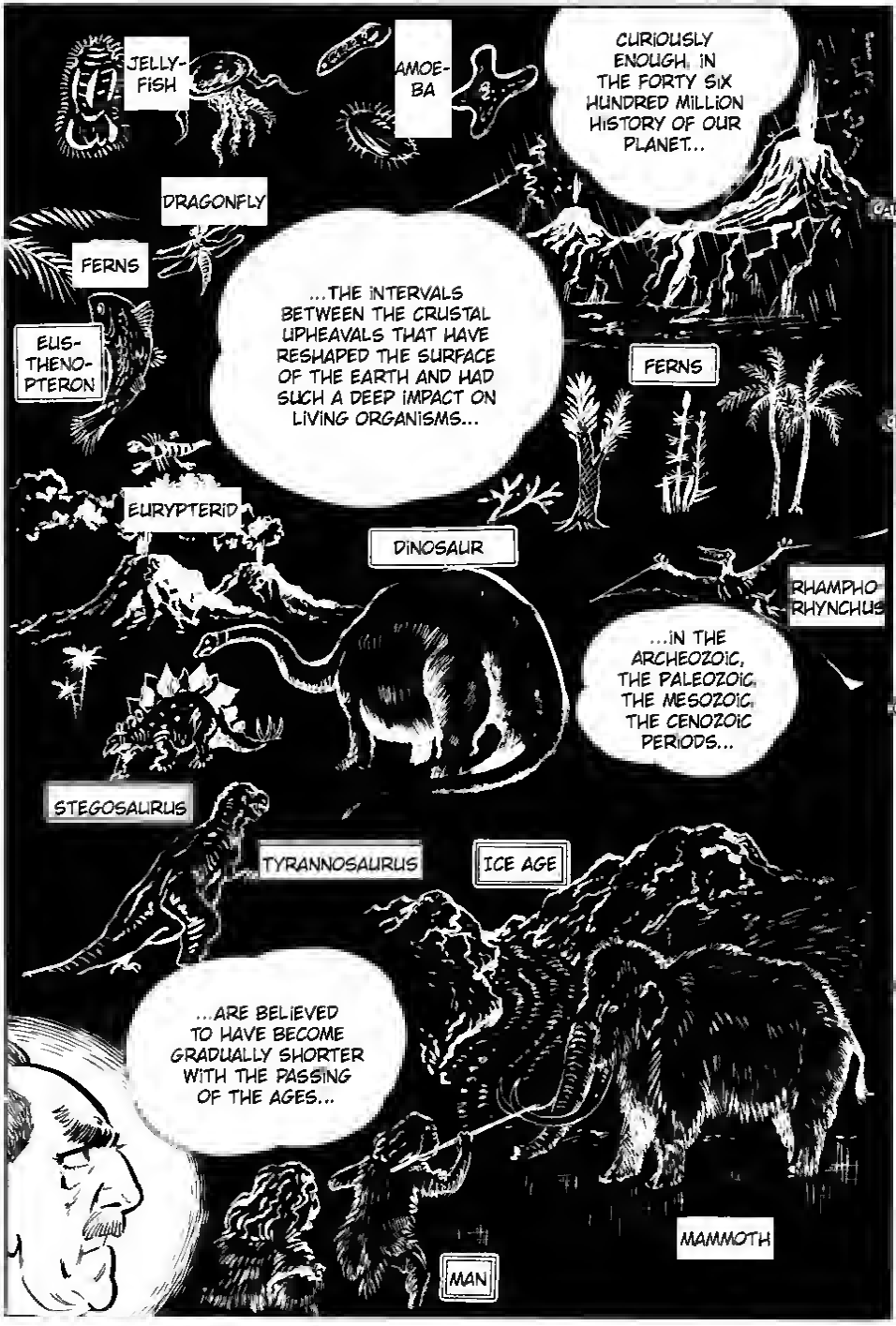

...AND A SERIES OF SMALL WHIRLPOOLS FORMED, A FACT CONFIRMED BY CHANDRASEKHAR'S CALCULATIONS.
...RATHER, AS THE CORE GREW TO A CERTAIN SIZE, THE WHIRLPOOL WAS SUDDENLY RIPPED APART...
THIS CHANGE WAS NOT A GRADUAL PROCESS...
MOST GEOLOGISTS AGREE THAT THE CONTINENTAL LAND MASS HAD BEEN STILL UNTIL THAT POINT...
AS A RESULT, AFRICA, EUROPE AND THE AMERICAS, WHICH HAD BEEN A SINGLE BLOCK UNTIL ABOUT TWO HUNDRED MILLION YEARS AGO, UNDERWENT A SUDDEN CHANGE.
...BUT IT NOW BROKE UP IN SMALLER PARTS WHICH BEGAN TO DRIFT AWAY FROM EACH OTHER.
...BUT THE ABRUPT CHANGE OF THE WHIRLPOOL'S SHAPE AND THE FORMATION OF SMALLER WHIRLPOOLS IN THE MANTLE TRIGGERED THE BREAKUP OF THE CONTINENTAL MASS.
UNTIL THE MESOZOIC AREA, THE MANTLE CONVECTION'S WHIRLPOOL WAS LARGE AND IT ALLOWED THE CONTINENTAL MASS THAT FLOATED ON THE MANTLE TO REMAIN IN ONE PLACE...






AND NOW... COULD WE BE WITNESSING THE START OF A NEW PERIOD OF VIOLENT CRUSTAL MOVEMENTS?
...FOLLOWED BY THE GREEN TUFF OROGENIC MOVEMENT, ACCOMPANIED BY UNPRECEDENTED VOLCANIC ACTIVITY, WHICH TEMPORARILY STABILIZED ABOUT 2,500 YEARS AGO...

...THEN, PROBABLY AS A DIRECT RESULT, WE HAD THE VAST ALTERATION OF THE CRUST KNOWN AS THE ALPINE OROGENIC MOVEMENT THAT SPANNED THE MESOZOIC AND THE CENOZOIC AND ENDED SIXTY MILLION YEARS AGO...
LET'S SEE, THE CONTINENTAL DRIFT STARTED TWO HUNDRED MILLION YEARS AGO...


JELLY-FISH
AMOE-BA
CURIOUSLY ENOUGH, IN THE FORTY SIX HUNDRED MILLION HISTORY OF OUR PLANET...
(ARCHEO-ZOIC)
DRAGONFLY
FERNS
...THE INTERVALS BETWEEN THE CRUSTAL UPHEAVALS THAT HAVE RESHAPED THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH AND HAD SUCH A DEEP IMPACT ON LIVING ORGANISMS...
EUS-THENO-PTERON
FERNS
(PALEO-ZOIC)
EURYPTERID
DINOSAUR
RHAMPHO-RHYNCHUS
...IN THE ARCHEOZOIC, THE PALEOZOIC, THE MESOZOIC, THE CENOZOIC PERIODS...
(MESO-ZOIC)
STEGOSAURUS
TYRANNOSAURUS
ICE AGE
(CENO-ZOIC)
...ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE BECOME GRADUALLY SHORTER WITH THE PASSING OF THE AGES...
MAMMOTH
MAN

...THE UPHEAVALS THEMSELVES SEEM TO HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY MORE VIOLENT IN SCALE.
NOT ONLY HAVE INTERVALS BETWEEN UPHEAVALS BECOME SHORTER...
...WHAT'S MORE, RATHER THAN A SIMPLE REPETITION OF THE PERIODICAL ALTERATIONS, COMPLETELY NEW PATTERNS OF "EVOLUTION" EMERGE FROM TIME TO TIME.
THE EARTH IS A LIVING THING AND, JUST LIKE WITH OTHER ANIMALS, THE SPEED AT WHICH IT EVOLVES TENDS TO ACCELERATE IN TIME,...
...IS JAPAN REALLY GOING TO SINK?
WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS...
ARE WE SEEING A NEW CHANGE IN THE PATTERN OF MANTLE CONVECTION BENEATH THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO... ?
...JUST BECAUSE SOMETHING HAS NEVER HAPPENED IN THE PAST, THERE'S NO GUARANTEE IT WON'T HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE!
LET ME REPEAT ONCE AGAIN THAT...
...

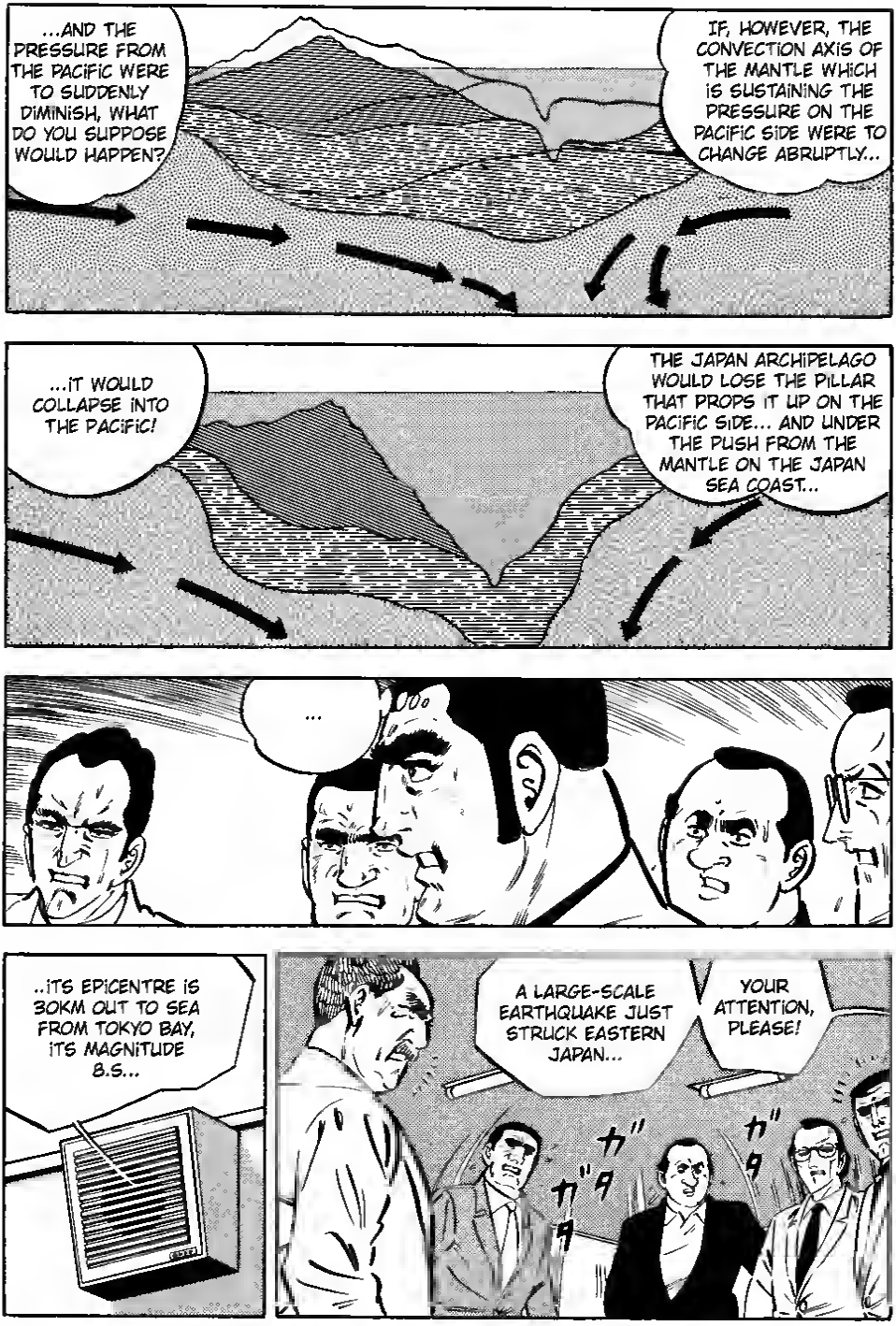
WE TALK ABOUT PAST UPHEAVALS BUT... WE NEVER EXPERIENCED THEM DIRECTLY... WE'VE ONLY SEEN THEIR "CORPSES", SO TO SPEAK.
AND WHAT HAS MODERN SCIENCE, WHICH IS NOT EVEN THREE CENTURIES OLD, TAUGHT US ABOUT OUR "PRE-HUMAN PAST"?
AND WHEN WE TALK ABOUT THE "PAST", LET'S NOT FORGET THAT MANKIND'S HISTORY GOES BACK ONLY A FEW TENS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS...
THE ONLY PAST CHANGES THAT WE "KNOW", ARE THE ONES THAT TOOK PLACE IN RECENT TIMES.
BUT WHAT CONSTITUTED AN ABNORMAL CHANGE TO MEN, IF CONSIDERED IN TERMS OF GEOLOGICAL ERAS, WOULD'VE PROBABLY GONE UNNOTICED...
... RISING AT A SPEED OF UP TO 1.5 M A DAY!
...AND WITHIN A YEAR IT HAD REACHED A HEIGHT OF OVER 300M...
IN 1944, HOKKAIDO'S FAMOUS SHOWASHINZAN LAVA DOME BEGAN TO EMERGE FROM THE GROUND...

THE FAMOUS ERUPTION OF KRAKATOA IN JAVA IN 1883 LEFT 36,000 PEOPLE DEAD...
... THE ASH FROM THE ERUPTION REACHED AN ALTITUDE OF 37.000 M AND REMAINED IN THE STRATOSPHERE FOR THREE YEARS. THE INTENSITY OF SOLAR RAYS WAS REDUCED BY TEN PERCENT AND THE WHOLE WORLD EXPERIENCED A DROP IN TEMPERATURES... AND CROP FAILURES...
THE LARGEST ERUPTION EVER RECORDED, THAT OF MT. TAMBORA ON THE INDONESIAN ISLAND OF SUMBAWA IN 1815, KILLED 56,000 PEOPLE...
THE GREAT EXPLOSION OF THE MONTPELEE VOLCANO ON THE ISLAND OF MARTINIQUE IN THE WEST INDIES GENERATED A SHOCK WAVE THAT MOVED AT A SPEED OF 150 METERS PER SECOND AND KILLED IN ONE INSTANT 28.000 PEOPLE IN THE VILLAGE OF SAINT PIERRE...

THE GREAT KANTO EARTHQUAKE, STILL FRESH IN OUR MEMORIES, LEFT 100,000 PEOPLE DEAD...
AND SINCE WE HAVE A VERY DIM UNDERSTANDING OF THE CRUSTAL CHANGES THAT TOOK PLACE BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF RECORDED HISTORY...
...WOULD BE SO SMALL AS TO BE HARDLY VISIBLE
ALL THESE ALTERATIONS OF THE EARTH'S CRUST, TERRIFYING CATASTROPHES FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, IF PLOTTED ON A GRAPH DESCRIBING CHANGE THROUGH GEOLOGICAL ERAS...
RECENTLY BORN EARTH
SUN

...IF WE CANNOT PREDICT THEM ON THE BASIS OF PAST DATA?
BUT HOW CAN WE EVER FORETELL FUTURE EVENTS, PROFESSOR...
...IS ABSOLUTELY INSUFFICIENT TO PREDICT THE OCCURRENCE OF FUTURE CHANGES OF A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT NATURE AND SCALE FROM THE ONES IN THE PAST,
...WE MUST CONCLUDE THAT OUR KNOWLEDGE OF RECENT TRANSFORMATIONS... OF THE CRUST...
THANKS TO OUR INTUITION AND IMAGINATION!
...THE SUDDEN COLLAPSE OF PART OF THE CONTINENTAL SLOPE..
...THE SIGNS OF A MOVEMENT TO THE EAST OF THE DEEPEST PART OF THE JAPAN TRENCH...
...THE RAPID SHIFT TO THE EAST OF THE NEGATIVE GRAVITY ANOMALY ON THE CONTINENTAL SLOPE OF THE JAPAN TRENCH... THE ACCOMPANYING CHANGES OF ELECTROMAGNETIC ANOMALIES AND HEAT CURRENTS...
AT THE MOMENT WE HAVE PLENTY OF FACTS TO STIMULATE OUR INTUITION AND IMAGINATION...

...WERE THEY TO CONTINUE AT THE CURRENT SPEED AND IN THE SAME DIRECTION, THE STRUCTURAL BALANCE BETWEEN THE MANTLE AND THE CRUST UNDER JAPAN COULD COLLAPSE AT A STROKE.
TO BE SURE, ALL THESE CHANGES ARE LOCAL AND VERY LIMITED IN SCALE, BUT...
...ALL HINTS OF AN ABRUPT CHANGE IN THE MANTLE FLOW UNDER THE PACIFIC SIDE. IN EVERY CORNER OF THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO THE CRUST IS CHANGING, SHRINKING OR BREAKING UP...
... THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO RECEIVES PRESSURE FROM THE SEA OF JAPAN STRONG ENOUGH TO CAUSE ITS MOVEMENT TO THE EAST AT A RATE OF ONE CM A YEAR.
I DON'T KNOW! BUT HERE'S WHAT WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT...
IN WHICH CASE... WHAT WOULD BE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR JAPAN, PROFESSOR?
...WAS NOT EXPECTED TO EXCEED 2.5 X10 23 ERG... EQUAL TO THE ENERGY RELEASED ANNUALLY BY EARTHQUAKES ACROSS THE WHOLE COUNTRY.
...ADD TO THIS PRESSURE THE SHIFT IN GRAVITATIONAL EQUILIBRIUM AND THE TEMPERATURE-PRESSURE IMBALANCE. NOW, THE ENERGY THAT CAN BE STORED UNDER THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO IN A YEAR...
...THANKS TO THE PRESSURE OF THE MANTLE FLOW FROM THE PACIFIC SIDE, WHICH ACTS AS A PROP.
THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO RELEASES THE ACCUMULATED ENERGY THROUGH EARTHQUAKES IN THE COURSE OF THE YEAR AND THUS MAINTAINS THE EQUILIBRIUM...


...AND THE PRESSURE FROM THE PACIFIC WERE TO SUDDENLY DIMINISH, WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE WOULD HAPPEN?
IF, HOWEVER, THE CONVECTION AXIS OF THE MANTLE WHICH IS SUSTAINING THE PRESSURE ON THE PACIFIC SIDE WERE TO CHANGE ABRUPTLY...
...IT WOULD COLLAPSE INTO THE PACIFIC!
THE JAPAN ARCHIPELAGO WOULD LOSE THE PILLAR THAT PROPS IT UP ON THE PACIFIC SIDE... AND UNDER THE PUSH FROM THE MANTLE ON THE JAPAN SEA COAST...
...
..ITS EPICENTRE IS 30KM OUT TO SEA FROM TOKYO BAY, ITS MAGNITUDE 8.5...
A LARGE-SCALE EARTHQUAKE JUST STRUCK EASTERN JAPAN...
YOUR ATTENTION, PLEASE!
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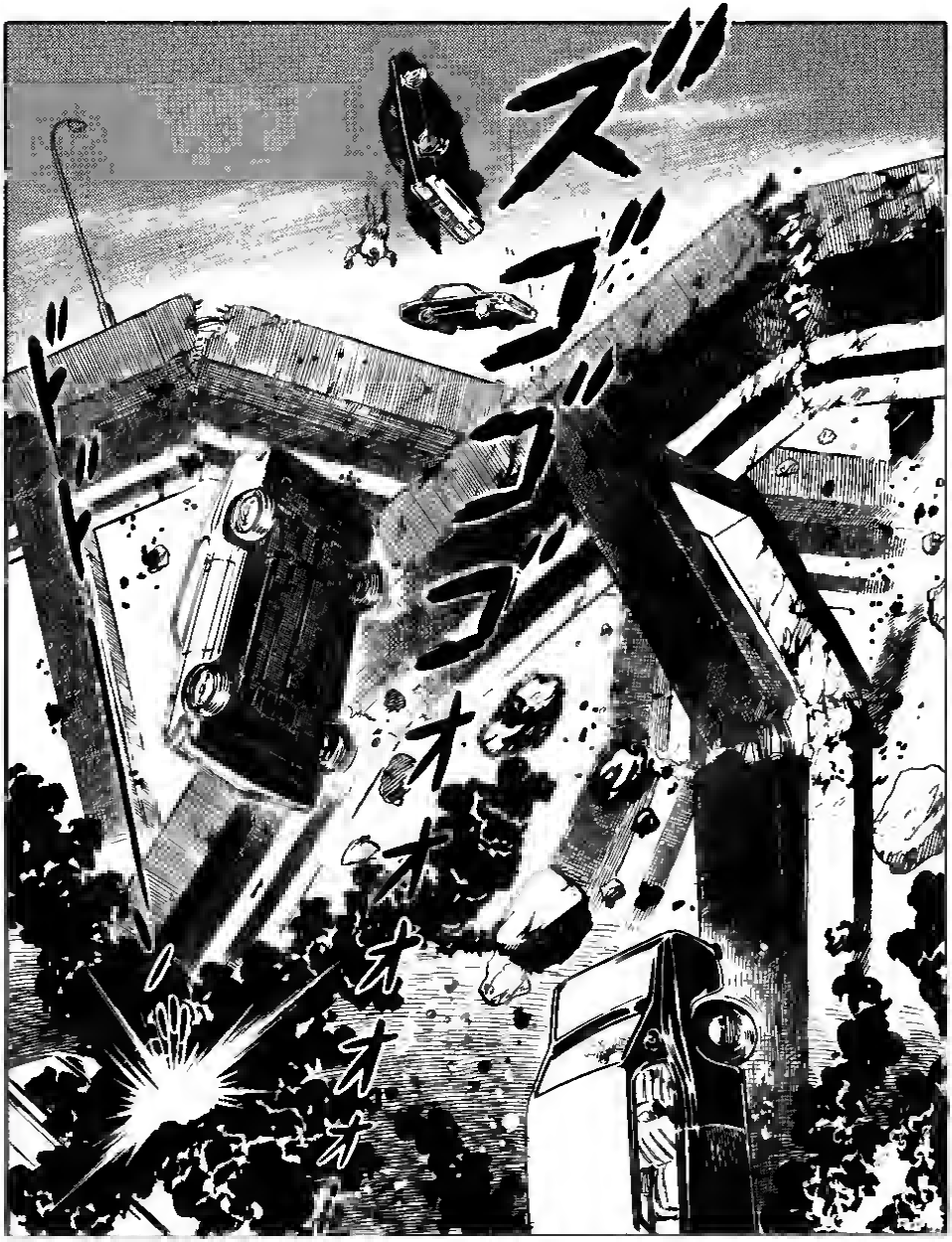
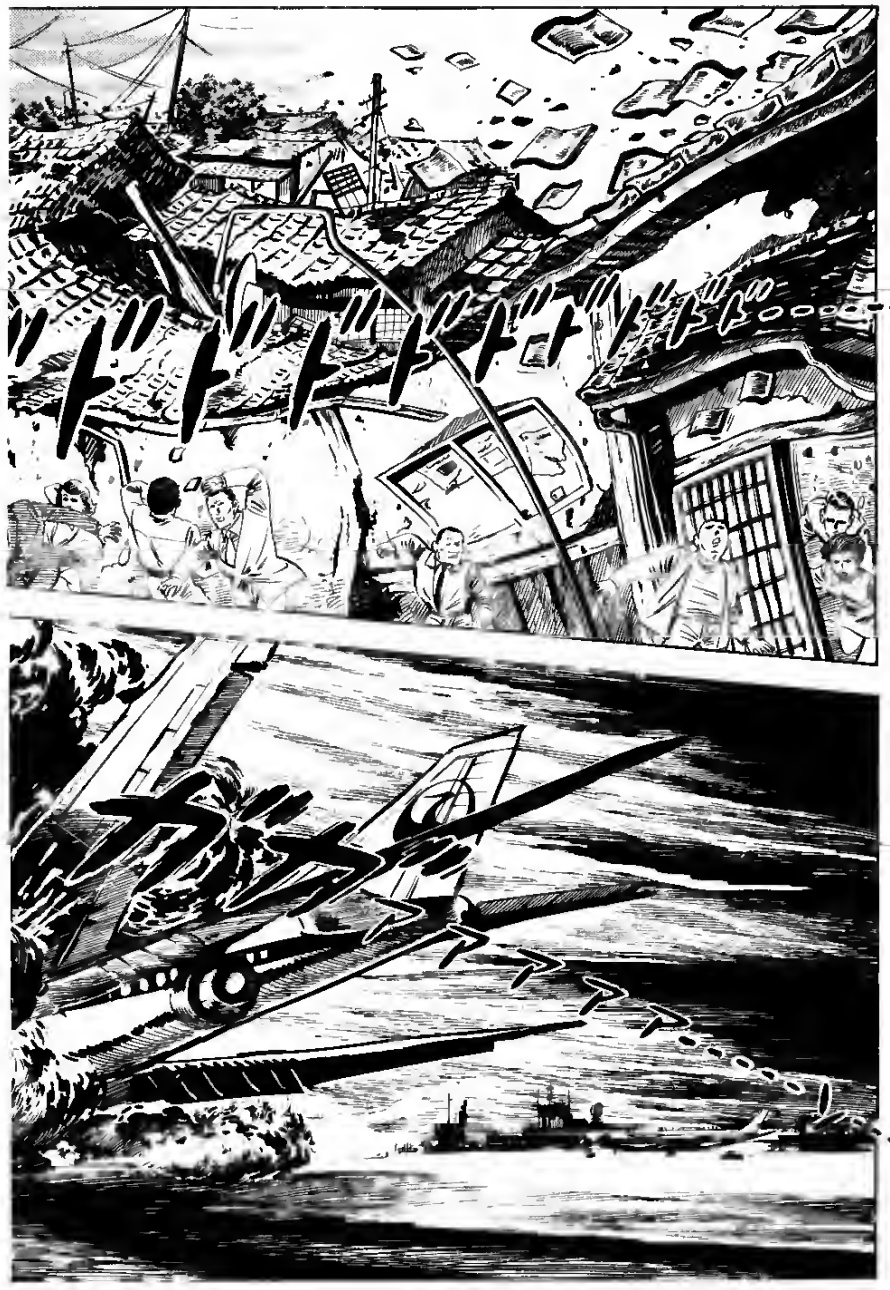
Chapter 5: The Japan Archipelago

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地下街
SU
ARCA

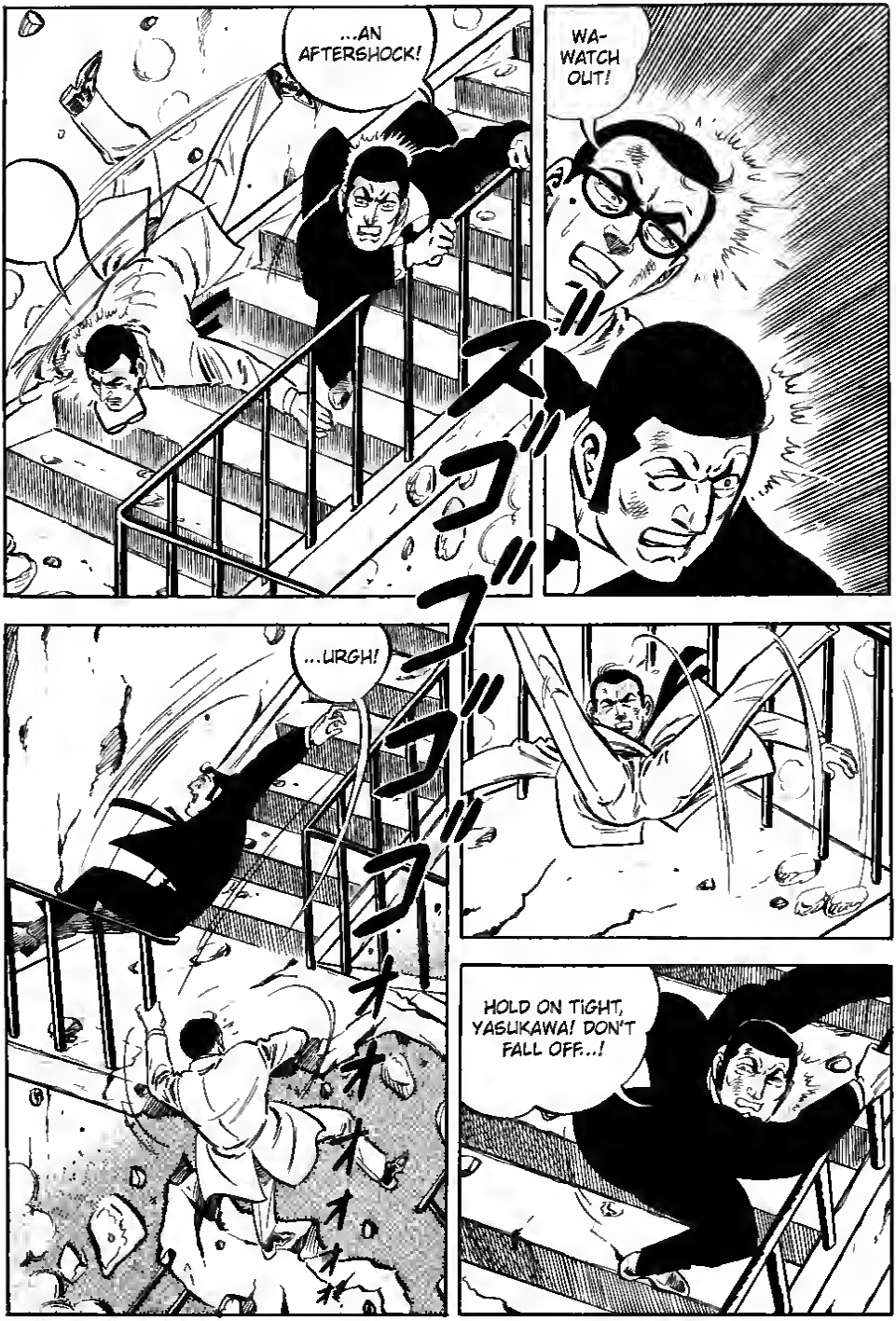
...THIS ONE'S... MUCH STRONGER THAN USUAL!
YA- YAMAZAKI ...!

...UNDER THE DESK!
UNDER THE DESK... QUICK!
ゴゴゴゴ
ズズズズズ
ガガ
...MY LIFE WILL HAVE HAD NO MEANING...
IF I DIE TODAY...
... THE BUILDING'S SWINGING LIKE CRAZY!
WILL IT COLLAPSE ...?

LETS' GET OUT OF HERE, FIRST.
...WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
...NOW WHAT ...?
LOTS OF CARS WITH FULL TANKS, OUTSIDE... I BET THEY'RE ALL BLOWING UP.
WHAT'S... THAT NOISE?
... IF IT COLLAPSES WE'LL BE BURIED IN THE RUBBLE...
WE ARE ON THE SIXTH FLOOR OF A SEVEN-STORY BUILDING...
...WE CANNOT STAY IN THE BUILDING!
IT'S STOPPED BUT... THERE MIGHT BE AFTERSHOCKS!
I DON'T KNOW...
THE ELEVATOR'S NO GOOD, RIGHT? WHAT ABOUT THE STAIRS?

DAMN!
...THE FIRE ESCAPE!
BLAST IT!

QUICK, YASUKAWA!
YAAH!


...AN AFTERSHOCK!
WA-WATCH OUT!
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...URGH!
HOLD ON TIGHT, YASUKAWA! DON'T FALL OFF...!

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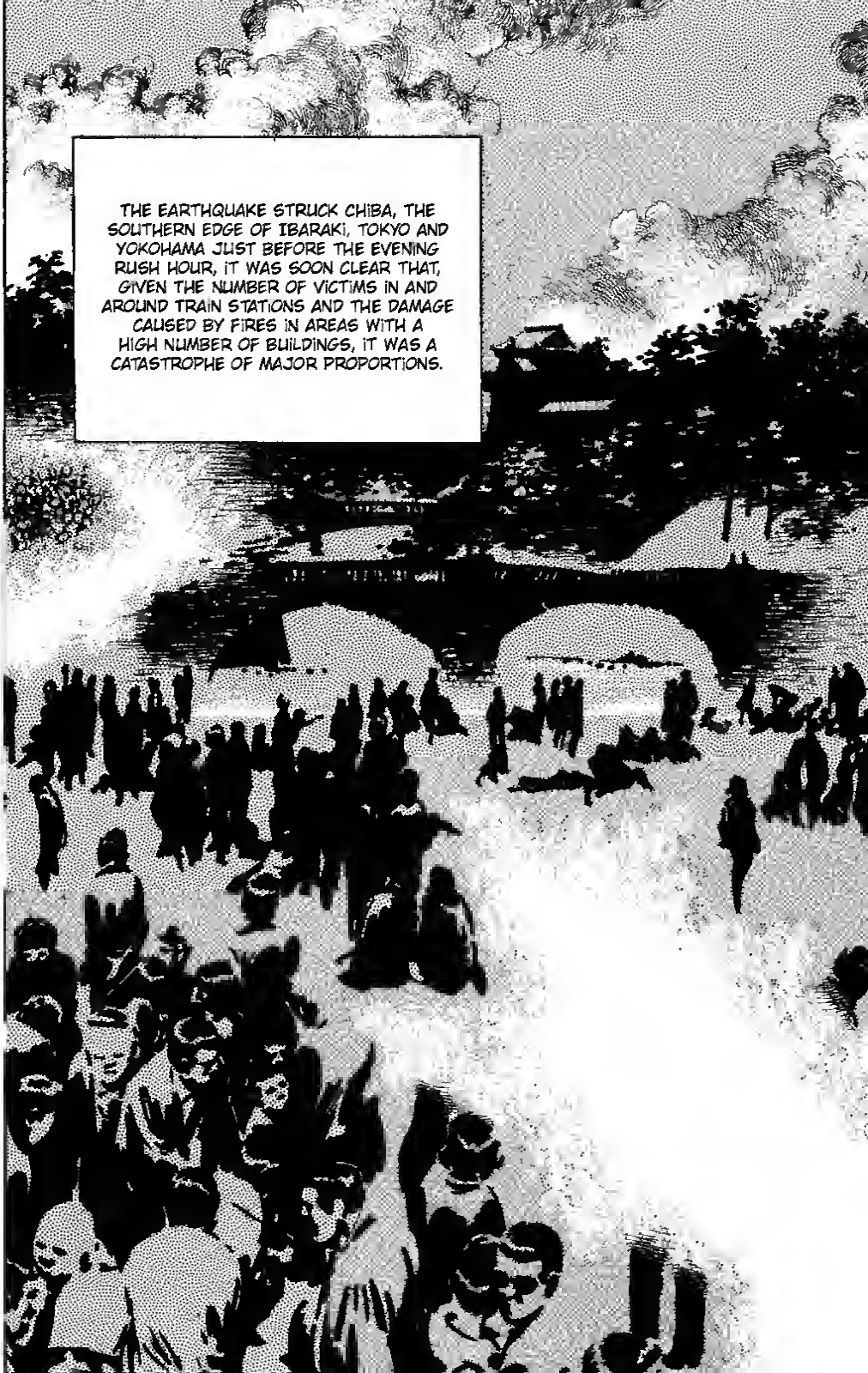
THE EARTHQUAKE STRUCK CHIBA, THE SOUTHERN EDGE OF IBARAKI, TOKYO AND YOKOHAMA JUST BEFORE THE EVENING RUSH HOUR, IT WAS SOON CLEAR THAT, GIVEN THE NUMBER OF VICTIMS IN AND AROUND TRAIN STATIONS AND THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY FIRES IN AREAS WITH A HIGH NUMBER OF BUILDINGS, IT WAS A CATASTROPHE OF MAJOR PROPORTIONS.

...WILL... WILL MY FAMILY BE ALL RIGHT...?
...IT CAME AT THE WORST POSSIBLE TIME... PEOPLE WERE GETTING READY TO HAVE DINNER...
...ALL THE HOUSING COMPLEXES IN TODAI ARE IN FLAMES...
...KOTO WARD IS FLOODED...
...TSUKIJI, SHINAGAWA... EVEN GINZA... COMPLETELY DEVASTATED...
...THE OIL SUPPLY TANKS ALONG THE OMORI WATERFRONT HAVE BLOWN UP...
...THEY SAY TOKYO BAY IS IN FLAMES BECAUSE OF OIL SPILLS...
...THE RESIDENTIAL AREAS IN SHIBUYA, AKASAKA AND AOYAMA HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO RUBBLE...
...ALL OF DOWNTOWN IS IN RUINS...
...IS MY FAMILY GOING TO BE OKAY...?
...I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER HOW I GOT HERE...
...WILL MY HOUSE STILL BE THERE...?

...RAIL SERVICE HAS BEEN SUSPENDED ON THE TOKAIDO BULLET TRAIN LINE, THE CHUO TRAIN LINE...
...THE SHINETSU TRAIN LINE AND THE TOHOKU MAIN TRAIN LINE...
...TURN UP THE VOLUME!
HEY! WE TOO WANT TO LISTEN TO THE RADIO!
...SEVERE DAMAGE HAS BEEN REPORTED THOUGHOUT EASTERN JAPAN... IN CHIBA, IBARAGI, THE TOKYO METROPOLITAN AREA, TOCHIGI, SAITAMA, EASTERN KANAGAWA, SOUTHERN GUNMA...
...HEAVY LOSSES IN TOKYO BAY CAUSED BY A TSUNAMI... FIRES... FLOODING CAUSED BY THE SINKING OF VAST STRETCHES OF RECLAIMED LAND ARE REPORTED IN THE KEIORINKAI INDUSTRIAL AREA...
...AT 6.10 P.M THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, HEEDING A REQUEST FROM THE TOKYO METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT, HAS DECIDED TO FORM AN EMERGENCY DISASTER COMMITTEE...
...STOP TALKING GARBAGE!
....WHAT?!
...I'VE HEARD RUMOURS THAT THE WHOLE COUNTRY... IS GOING UNDER...
I SURE HOPE IT WON'T GET WORSE THAN THIS...
...I REPEAT, THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT...

くすり オオツカ
OTSUKA
DRUGSTORE
TAKABASHI
FLOWERS
高橋花店

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...IT'S HOPELESS!
CARRY IT ON FOOT THEN! QUICK!
...THE TRUCK IS STUCK IN TRAFFIC?
WHERE'S THE DYNAMITE? HURRY UP!
THE FIRE'S ADVANCING TOO FAST, WE CAN'T STOP IT!
ABANDON THE AREA IMMEDIATELY!
WE'RE ABOUT TO BRING DOWN SOME BUILDINGS TO STOP THE ADVANCE OF THE FIRE.
EVERYBODY STAND BACK! IT'S DANGEROUS!

AAAWWW-GH!
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...AN AFTER-SHOCK!
YARRHH!
フォオオオオーイ!!
HELP...!
NOOO!

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
...TOXIC GAS! FROM BUILDING MATERIALS...!
...THIS SMELL....? ...GAS?
K-KOFF!

非常災害対策本部
EMERGENCY
DISASTER
COMMITTEE

HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT AT A TIME LIKE THIS!
I UNDERSTAND WE'RE SHORT OF MEN BUT... WASN'T IT RASH TO SEND IN THE RIOT POLICE?
IN KANDA AND SHINJUKU CLASHES HAVE BROKEN OUT BETWEEN RIOT POLICE AND SURVIVORS...
THE CITY GOVERNOR IS DEAD... THE VICE-GOVERNOR IS SERIOUSLY INJURED... AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S CHAIN OF COMMAND IS IN DISARRAY...
ENOUGH OF THAT. HOW'S THE FIRE FIGHTING EFFORT PROGRESSING?
IT WAS AGREED FROM THE START THAT RIOT POLICE UNITS WOULD RELIEVE SELF-DEFENCE FORCES!
... THE FEW UNITS THAT MADE IT THROUGH REPORTED BEING UNABLE TO PUT OUT THE FIRES DUE TO THE INTERRUPTION IN THE WATER SUPPLY.
... WITH VERY STRONG WINDS BLOWING AND WITH MOST ROADS BLOCKED BY DEBRIS, IT'S VERY DIFFICULT TO REACH AFFECTED AREAS...
A NEW REPORT JUST IN... FIRES ARE ESTIMATED TO HAVE BROKEN OUT IN 6000 SPOTS WITHIN THE CITY BUT...
WE'VE ALREADY DISPATCHED THE FIRE SERVICE'S HELICOPTER UNIT IN KASUMIGAURA...
CAN WE SEND IN HELI-COPTERS?

THEY CAN'T FLY AT LOW ALTITUDES LIKE HELICOPTERS AND POSE MANY DANGERS... THEY WOULD ONLY ADD TO THE CONFUSION.
AIRPLANES ARE NO GOOD.
...WHY NOT MOBILIZING ALL RECONNAISSANCE PLANE AND FIGHTER AIRCRAFT EQUIPPED WITH FIRE-EXTINGUISHING GRENADES?
I WILL DO ANYTHING IN MY POWER TO PREVENT IT.
I DO, PRIME MINISTER.
...THE CONSEQUENCES SHOULD THE FIRES REACH THE CITY CENTRE OR ANY GOVERNMENT BUILDING?
JOINT STAFF CHAIRMAN, DO YOU REALIZE...
...ACCORDING TO THE CHIEF OF POLICE, THE CROWDS ARE IN A STATE OF NEAR PANIC AND DISTURBING RUMOURS ARE SPREADING THROUGHOUT THE CITY...
THERE'S A NEW REPORT...
...GIVE ORDERS TO ALL THE HELICOPTERS OF THE NAVAL DEFENSE FORCE'S BASE IN YOKOSUKA TO LOAD FIRE-EXTINGUISHING GRENADES AND TO TAKE OFF TO TOKYO NOW!
THE JOINT STAFF CHAIRMAN HERE....

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YOWLLL!
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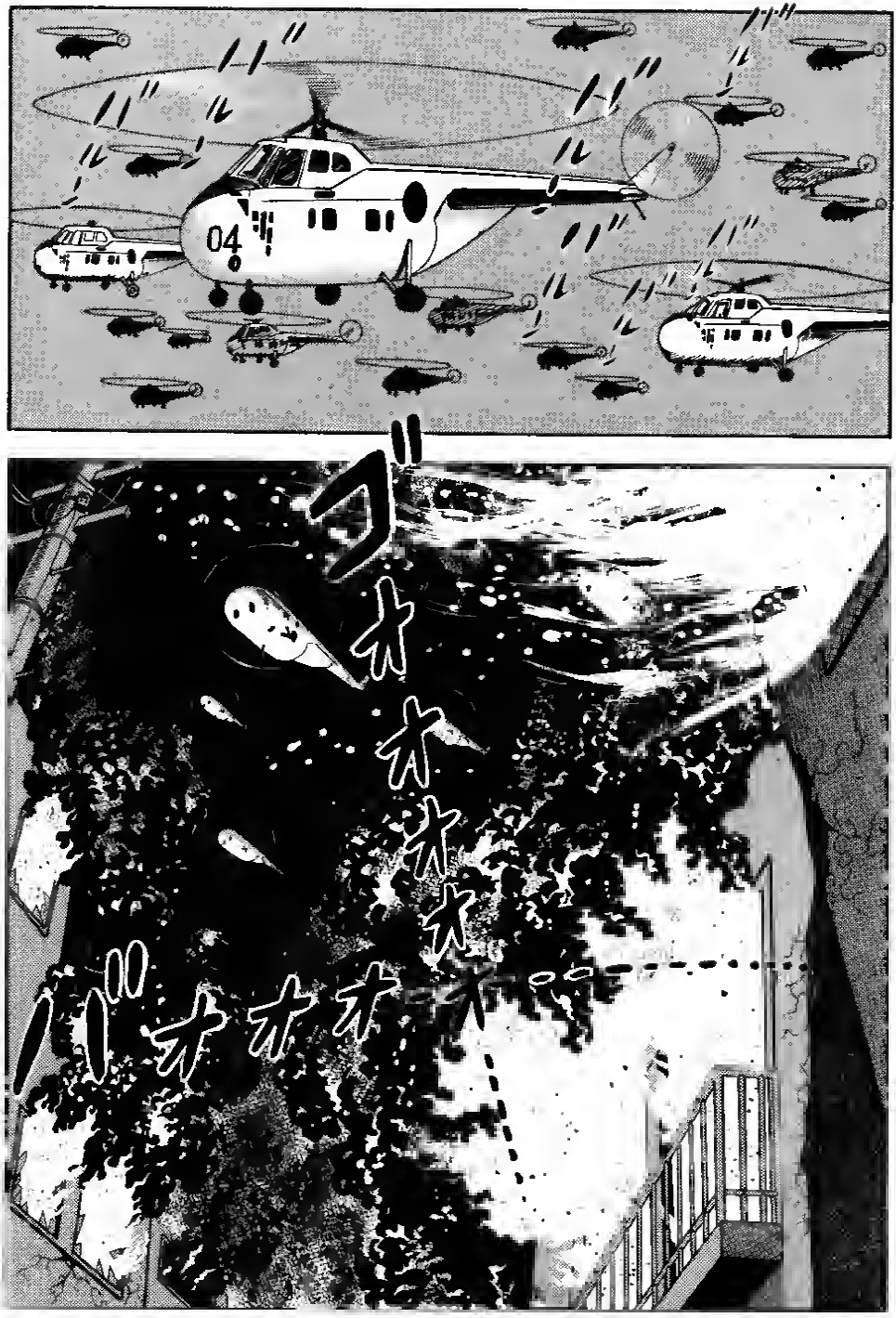
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EEEEK!
WAHHH!
NOOO!
AWWWRG-HHH!
NOOOO!
YAAARR-HHH!

04
!?
... IT LOOKS LIKE HELL ITSELF DOWN THERE!
...THE FIRE'S SPREAD OUT OF CONTROL!
THIS IS NOT GOING TO WORK!

グラッ
DAMN!
...A HOT GUST!
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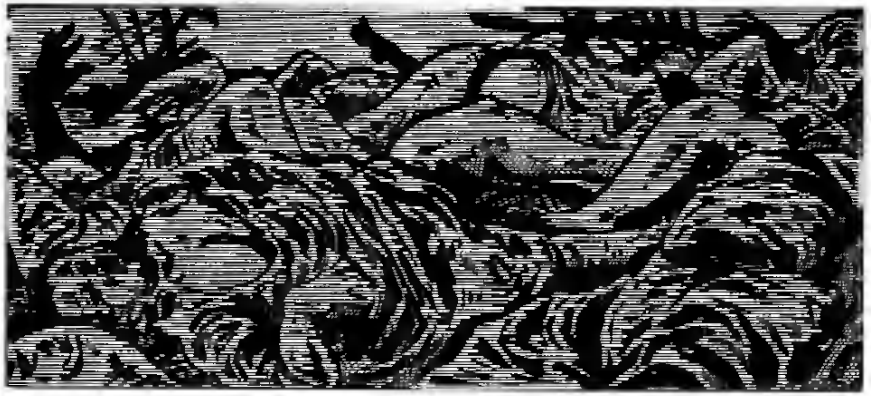
AS THE FIRES KEPT ADVANCING, THEIR RED GLOW LIGHTING UP THE SKY, THE FEAR OF BEING SURROUNDED FROM ALL SIDES BY AN OCEAN OF FIRE SPREAD THOUGH THE POPULATION...
AS NIGHT FELL OVER THE CITY, THE OMINOUS RUMBLINGS THAT HAD FOLLOWED THE EARTHQUAKE GRADUALLY CEASED BUT THE FIRE CONTINUED ITS DESTRUCTIVE MARCH IN THE ALMOST TOTAL DARKNESS...



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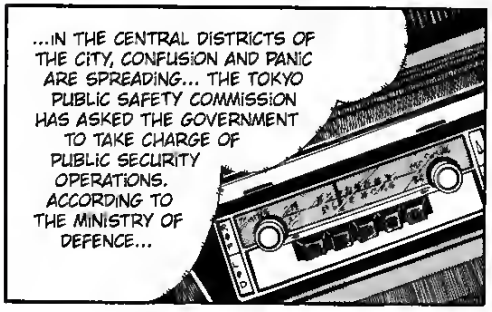
YOU'RE A TAXI DRIVER! DRIVING PEOPLE IS YOUR JOB!
...AT LEAST TAKE THE WOUNDED TO A HOSPITAL! THERE ARE PEOPLE WITH BROKEN BONES... BURNS...
TAKE ME TO SETAGAYA, I BEG YOU! I'LL PAY YOU ANY AMOUNT OF MONEY!
...TAKE ME THERE, PLEASE!


...IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICTS OF THE CITY, CONFUSION AND PANIC ARE SPREADING... THE TOKYO PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION HAS ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE CHARGE OF PUBLIC SECURITY OPERATIONS. ACCORDING TO THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE...

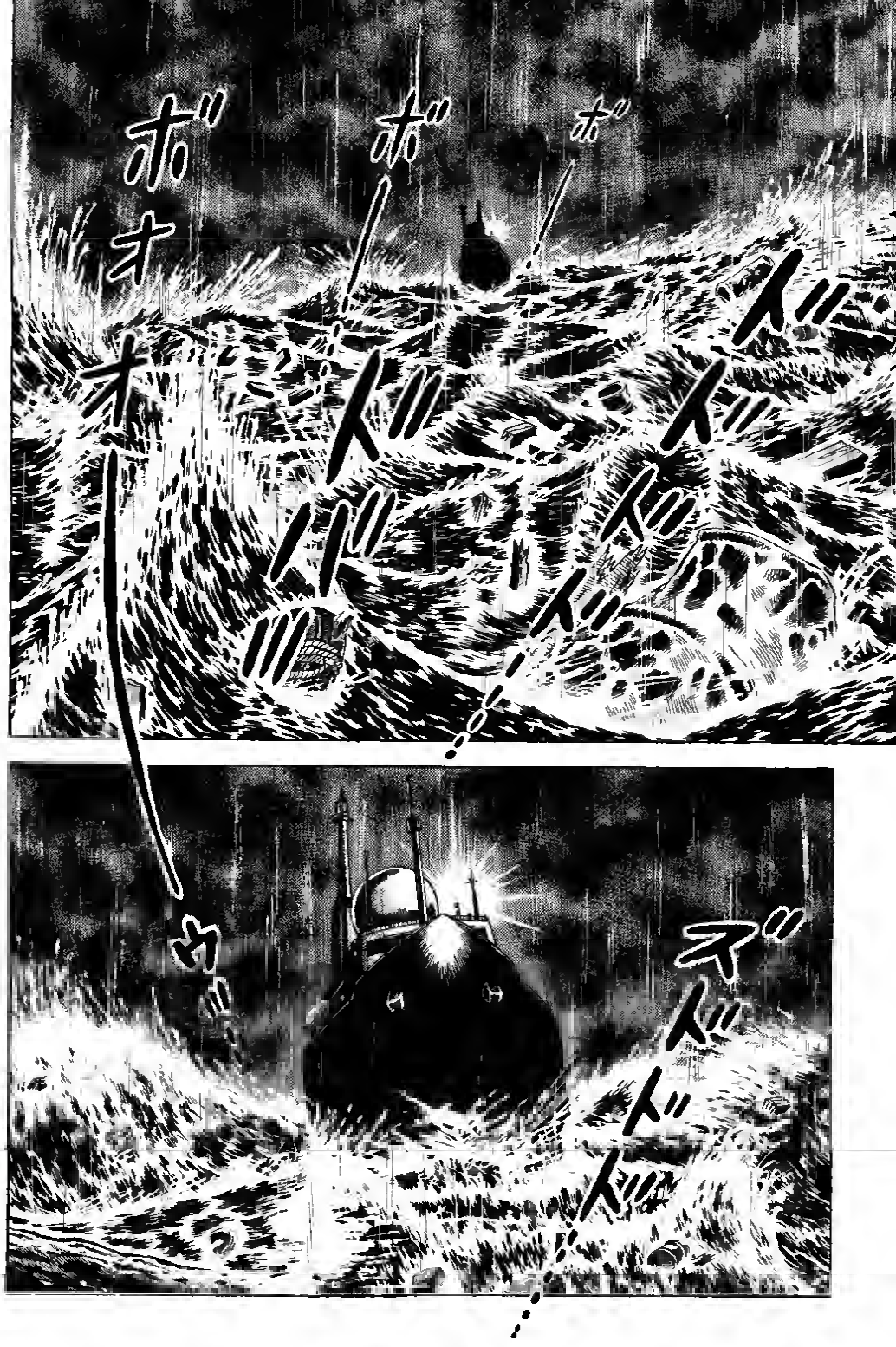
...I BARELY ESCAPED FROM THE FIRE MYSELF!
I CAN'T! THE STREETS ARE BLOCKED BY RUBBLE AND FIRES...!

... WHEN THE BUILDING COLLAPSED... WAS I THROWN OUTSIDE...?
I... I CAN'T REMEMBER HOW I GOT OUT OF THERE...

...IT WILL TAKE A LONG TIME BEFORE THEY START RUNNING AGAIN... THEY HAVEN'T EVEN REMOVED THE BODIES...
...THE RAIL TRACKS ARE COMPLETELY TWISTED IN MANY PLACES... THERE HAVE BEEN LAND-SLIDES... THE GROUND IS CRACKED...

...THE TRAINS...?
...ARE THE TRAINS RUNNING NOW...?
...EXCUSE ME, PLEASE TELL ME...

...THE GOVERNMENT, GIVEN THE GRAVITY OF THE CURRENT SITUATION...HAS DECLARED A NATIONAL STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE WWII... I REPEAT, THE GOVERNMENT...
...AND NOW SOME BREAKING NEWS...
...THERE IS A DEFINITE POSSIBILITY THAT RELIEF OPERATIONS WILL GIVE WAY TO SECURITY OPERATIONS...
IT ALWAYS RAINS AFTER A BIG FIRE... IT WAS THE SAME AFTER THE AIR RAIDS DURING THE WAR...
UH, RAIN?!
THIS IS BAD...
IS...THE WORST REALLY GOING TO HAPPEN?
...WHAT WOULD BECOME OF PLAN D?
AND IF THE PRESENT CABINET SHOULD FALL...
IT'S REALLY BAD... THE CHAOS WILL BE BLAMED ON THE GOVERNMENT...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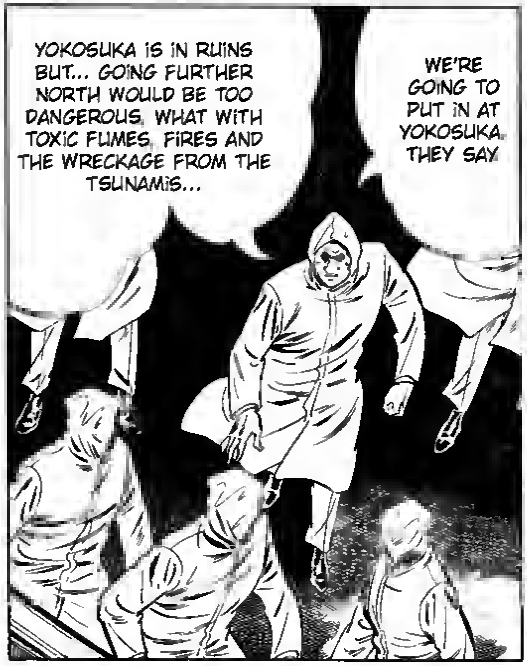
...AND SO IS CHIBA... AND KAWASAKI.
TOKYO'S IN FLAMES...
...DURING RUSH HOUR... AND WHEN THE TIDE WAS TWO-THREE METRES HIGH... TALK ABOUT BAD LUCK!
THE TSUNAMI MUST'VE HIT ABOUT THREE HOURS AGO...
...LOOKS LIKE THE CITY TOOK QUITE A BATTERING.
AT LEAST THIS RAIN WILL PUT OUT A FEW FIRES....

UGH... WHAT A STENCH.
A GAS TANK JUST EXPLODED...


YOKOSUKA IS IN RUINS BUT... GOING FURTHER NORTH WOULD BE TOO DANGEROUS, WHAT WITH TOXIC FUMES, FIRES AND THE WRECKAGE FROM THE TSUNAMIS...
WE'RE GOING TO PUT IN AT YOKOSUKA, THEY SAY.

KU KU KU

OFF THE STARBOARD BOW... MAN IN THE WATER!

*LIGHTERS: BARGES USED TO TRANSPORT STONES, FERTILIZER AND SUPPLIES.

HOW DID IT GO? DID YOU FIND THEM?
...
...
WE FOUND THEM BUT...
...THEY ARE... CONFUSIONAL.
PRO-FESSOR TADORO...
THE KEIHIN AND KEIO AREAS WERE BADLY HIT...
...IT WOULD SEEM THE TOKYO WATERFRONT WAS WIPED OUT...
THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING...
THE BEGINNING OF THE WORST...
I'M WORRIED ABOUT MY FAMILY... IN TAMACHI...
AND WHAT ABOUT YAMAZAKI AND YASUKAWA...? LET'S HOPE THEY'RE SAFE.
...

UNHH...
UNHH....
I... DON'T KNOW...
WHERE... ARE YOU GOING?
ARE YOU HURT?
...I'M COLD... I'M SO COLD...
PLAN D'S YASU-KAWA.

MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO SEE THEM...
A SELF-DEFENCE FORCE'S MEDICAL TEAM HAS ARRIVED IN AOYAMA...
...I DON'T FEEL GOOD...
I DON'T KNOW!
...TRIPPING ON SOMETHING... FALLING TO THE GROUND... BEING TRAMPLED ON BY MANY PEOPLE... WHEN I CAME TO I WAS... IN A GRAVEYARD...
...I REMEMBER... RUNNING AROUND IN THE DARK...
I DON'T KNOW...
...
...WHERE'S AOYAMA...?
...AOYAMA ...?
...BUT WHO... WHO AM I...?
...I... DON'T CARE ABOUT ANYTHING... I JUST WANT TO... REST...
WHO CARES...? WHO CARES... IF I LOST MY MEMORY...

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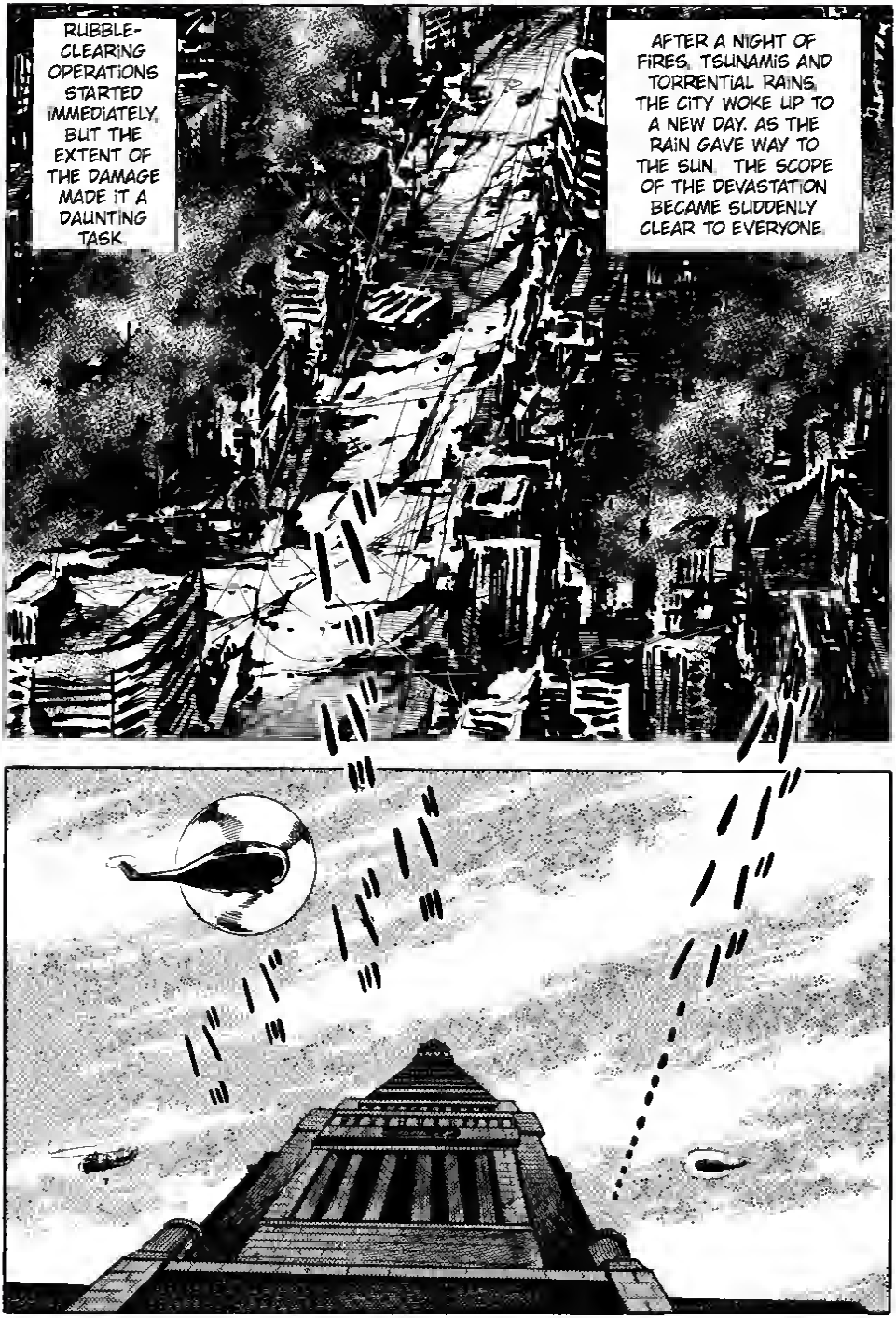
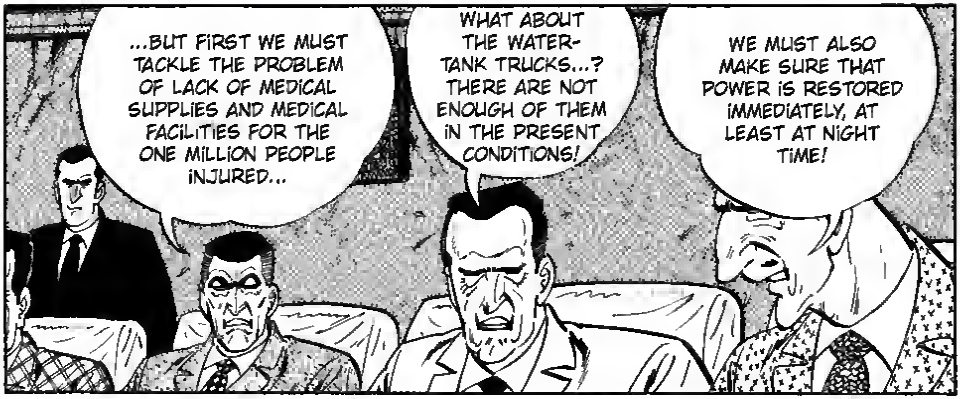
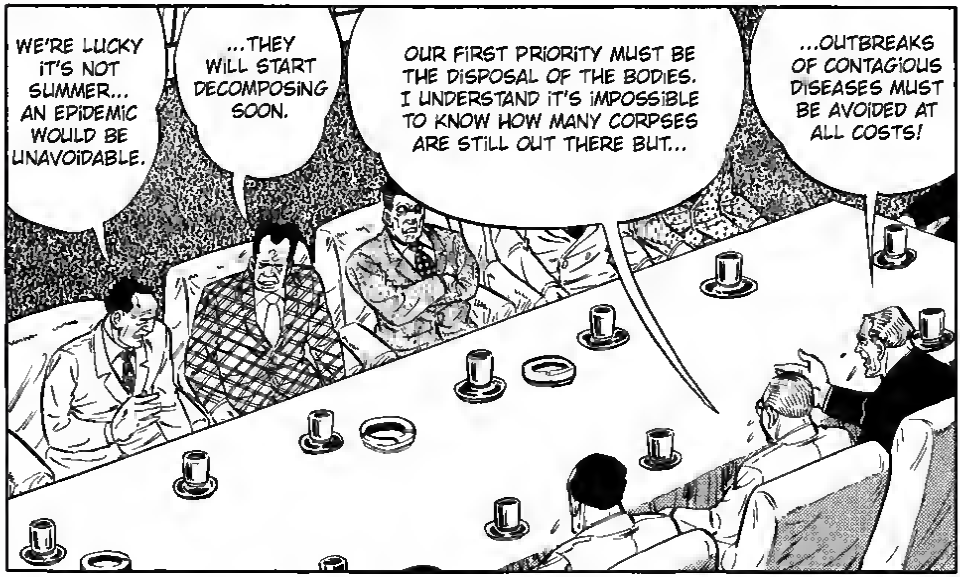

RUBBLE-CLEARING OPERATIONS STARTED IMMEDIATELY, BUT THE EXTENT OF THE DAMAGE MADE IT A DAUNTING TASK.
AFTER A NIGHT OF FIRES, TSUNAMIS AND TORRENTIAL RAINS, THE CITY WOKE UP TO A NEW DAY. AS THE RAIN GAVE WAY TO THE SUN, THE SCOPE OF THE DEVASTATION BECAME SUDDENLY CLEAR TO EVERYONE.

...THE DEAD AND THE MISSING IN THE TOKYO METROPOLITAN AREA ALONE ARE ESTIMATED AT ABOUT ONE MILLION AND A HALF...
HERE ARE SOME FIGURES ON THE EXTENT OF THE PRESENT DISASTER...
IN THESE AREAS ALONE, CLOSE TO 400,000 PEOPLE DIED IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF THE EARTH-QUAKE...
...FROM A NEARBY CHEMICAL PLANT GUTTED BY THE FIRES.
...THE TOLL WAS PARTICULARLY SEVERE IN THE HEAVILY POPULATED AREAS OF KOTO WARD AND TAITO WARD WHERE MANY PEOPLE TRYING TO ESCAPE WERE CUT DOWN BY POISONOUS GASES... CHLORINE, HYDROGEN CYANIDE, PHOSGENE AND CARBON MONOXIDE...
ADDITIONAL CASUALTIES WERE CAUSED BY FIRES, BY THE ENSUING PANIC IN MANY STATIONS DURING PEAK HOURS, AND BY TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.
FURTHERMORE, AS A RESULT OF THE TSUNAMI, THE SUMIDAGAWA, ARAKAWA, AND EDOGAWA RIVERS HAVE BREACHED THEIR EMBANKMENTS AND KOTO WARD, SUMIDA WARD AND PART OF EDOGAWA WARD WERE COMPLETELY FLOODED.

AND THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF DAMAGE TO SEVERAL TENS OF TRILLIONS OF YEN...
...THE TOTAL OF THE DEAD AND THE MISSING CLIMBS TO ABOUT 2,5 MILLION....
IF WE ADD CASUALTIES FROM CHIBA, KANAGAWA, AND THE NORTHERN PART OF SHIZUOKA PREFECTURE WHERE THE EFFECTS OF THE TSUNAMI WERE STRONGEST, AND FROM IBARAGI AND SAITAMA...
... WE NEED TO RESTORE CONFI-DENCE AMONG THE VICTIMS...
...THAT'S BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE STILL IN SHOCK...
RIOTS HAVE BROKEN OUT AS THE POLICE WERE TRYING TO DISPERSE ON-LOOKERS DISRUPTING CLEARING OPERATIONS AROUND TOKYO STATION...
WHAT NOW...?


...BUT FIRST WE MUST TACKLE THE PROBLEM OF LACK OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND MEDICAL FACILITIES FOR THE ONE MILLION PEOPLE INJURED...
WHAT ABOUT THE WATER-TANK TRUCKS...? THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH OF THEM IN THE PRESENT CONDITIONS!
WE MUST ALSO MAKE SURE THAT POWER IS RESTORED IMMEDIATELY, AT LEAST AT NIGHT TIME!


WE'RE LUCKY IT'S NOT SUMMER... AN EPIDEMIC WOULD BE UNAVOIDABLE.
...THEY WILL START DECOMPOSING SOON.
OUR FIRST PRIORITY MUST BE THE DISPOSAL OF THE BODIES. I UNDERSTAND IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW HOW MANY CORPSES ARE STILL OUT THERE BUT...
...OUTBREAKS OF CONTAGIOUS DISEASES MUST BE AVOIDED AT ALL COSTS!

...

IF WE CANNOT GUARANTEE THE FOOD SUPPLY, WE'LL SOON BE FACING HUNGRY MOBS!
THE MOST PRESSING PROBLEM IS FOOD!

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...THRASH THEM!
...KILL'EM!
...GET THEM!
DIE!
BASTARD!

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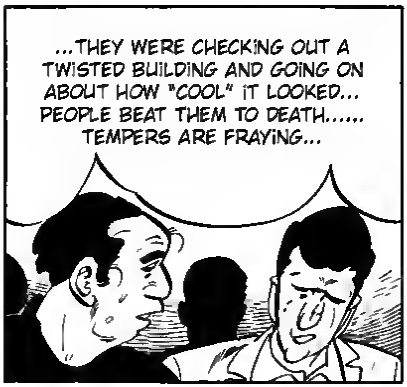
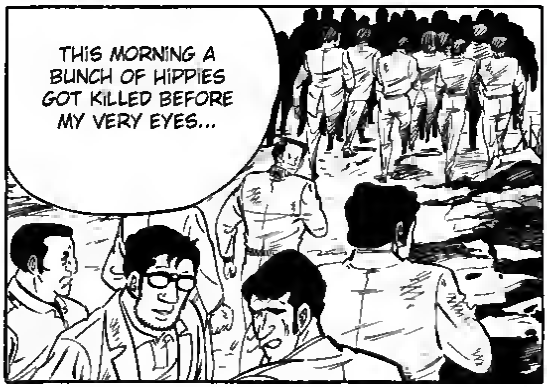
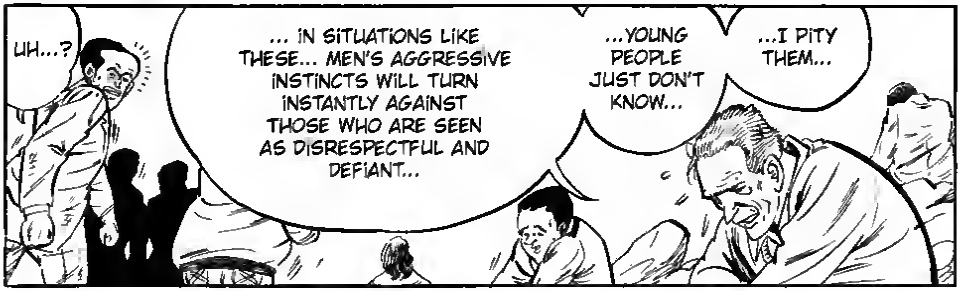
...SUITS YOU RIGHT!
DAMN!
PHEEEEW
PHEEEEEW

...
EVERY-
BODY
GOT
MAD AT
THEM!
...WERE GOING AROUND HANGING FLAGS, TELLING PEOPLE THE REVOLUTION HAD STARTED... THAT IT WAS TIME TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT...
....
THESE
IDIOTS
...

WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON HERE?


...THEY WERE CHECKING OUT A TWISTED BUILDING AND GOING ON ABOUT HOW "COOL" IT LOOKED... PEOPLE BEAT THEM TO DEATH..... TEMPERS ARE FRAYING...


THIS MORNING A BUNCH OF HIPPIES GOT KILLED BEFORE MY VERY EYES...


UH...?
... IN SITUATIONS LIKE THESE... MEN'S AGGRESSIVE INSTINCTS WILL TURN INSTANTLY AGAINST THOSE WHO ARE SEEN AS DISRESPECTFUL AND DEFIANT...
...YOUNG PEOPLE JUST DON'T KNOW...
...I PITY THEM...

...AN AFTERSHOCK!
AAAH!
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I DON'T EVEN WANT TO THINK WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO TOKYO IF THAT WERE TRUE...
YOU'RE TALKING TRASH!
...BUT WHO IS TO SAY THE NEXT ONE'S NOT GOING TO BE A MASSIVE ONE?
IT'S ALREADY STOPPED... IT WAS A SMALL ONE...
...YEAH... PEOPLE SAY THE WHOLE COUNTRY WILL GO UNDER...
WHAT?!
...BUT... I HEARD RUMOURS... DISASTER IS COMING...
HEY!
...YOU'RE SAYING... WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE?
IF YOU SAY IT ONCE MORE... I'LL KILL YOU!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
STOP IT!
HE'S MAKING FUN OF US ALL!
THIS LOWLIFE IS SPREADING FALSE RUMOURS!
...WHAT'S GOING ON...?
...FOR SPREADING THE SAME RUMOURS IN PALACE SQUARE!
AN OLD FART GOT HIMSELF BEATEN TO DEATH...
...IF THAT WERE TRUE... OUR WOMEN...OUR CHILDREN... THEY'D ALL DIE!
...HE SAYS JAPAN'S GOING TO SINK!
...HEY... HOLD ON A MINUTE...
DO YOU... BELIEVE THOSE LIES TOO?
WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THAT?
!

...
PLAN D'S YAMA-ZAKI
IS THAT SO?
I BET YOU'D BE HAPPY IF JAPAN SANK, RIGHT?
...COME ON, SAY IT!
YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST MAKE FUN OF US?
...YOU LOST YOUR TONGUE...? SAY SOMETHING!

YOU LIE!
WHAT ?!
EVERYONE'S ENTITLED TO THEIR OPINIONS... AS FOR ME... I THINK THERE MAY BE SOME TRUTH IN THAT...
CALM DOWN!
YOU'LL DIE FIRST!
BASTARD !
NGHHH!

GHAAA!
...RUN!
...ANOTHER ONE!
...A QUAKE!

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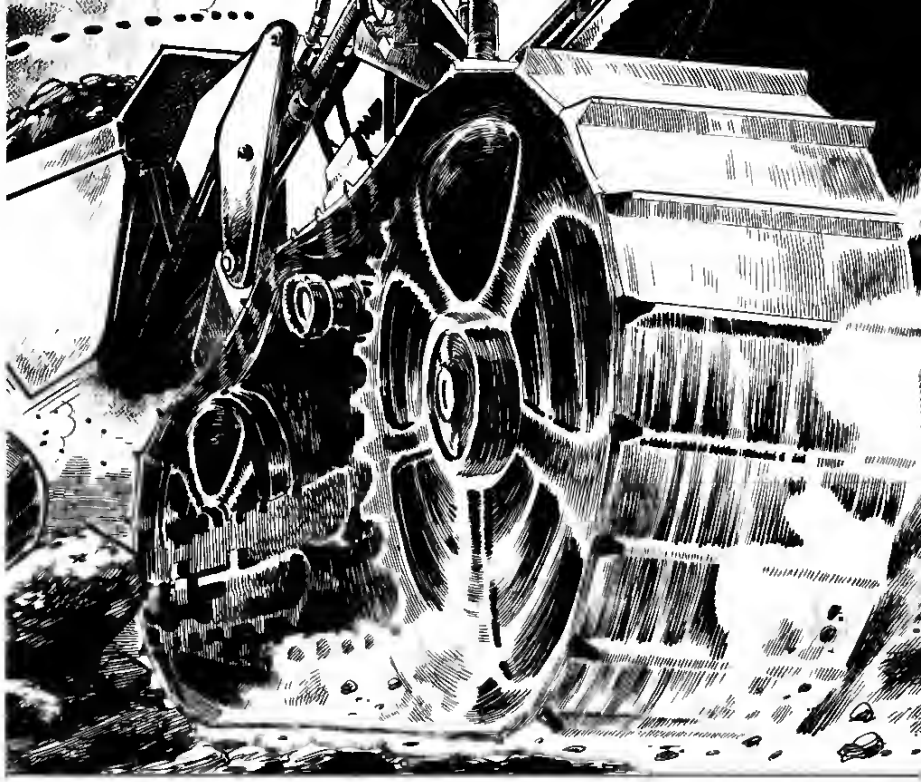
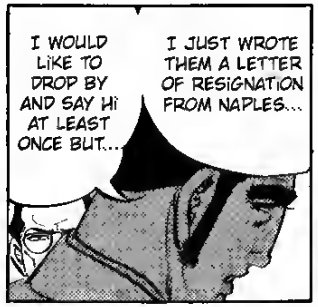
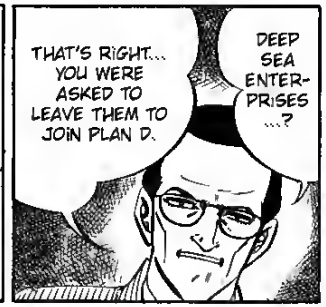


...I WONDER HOW THEY'RE DOING...
JUST... EVERY TIME I'M BACK IN TOKYO I CAN'T HELP THINKING ABOUT MY OLD FIRM...

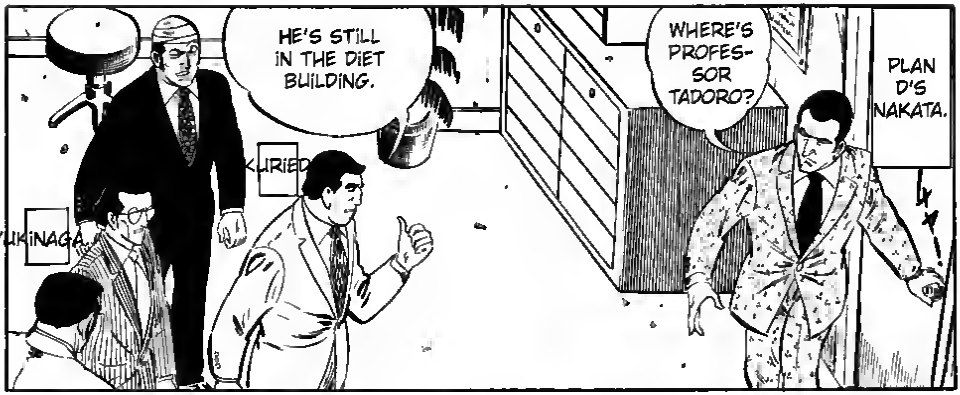
IT'S NOTHING, REALLY...
YOU SEEM WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING...
WHAT'S WRONG, ONODERA?

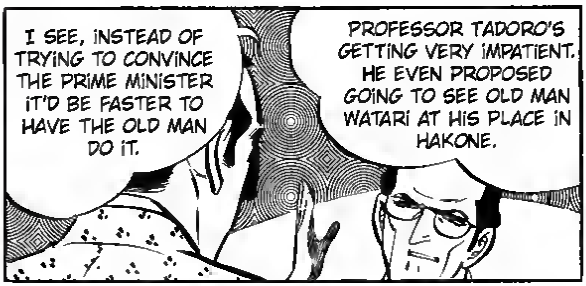
...I NEVER SEEM TO HAVE THE TIME.


I WOULD LIKE TO DROP BY AND SAY HI AT LEAST ONCE BUT...
I JUST WROTE THEM A LETTER OF RESIGNATION FROM NAPLES...

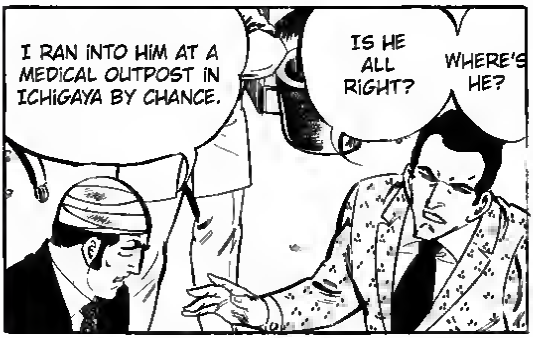

THAT'S RIGHT... YOU WERE ASKED TO LEAVE THEM TO JOIN PLAN D.
DEEP SEA ENTER-PRISES ...?

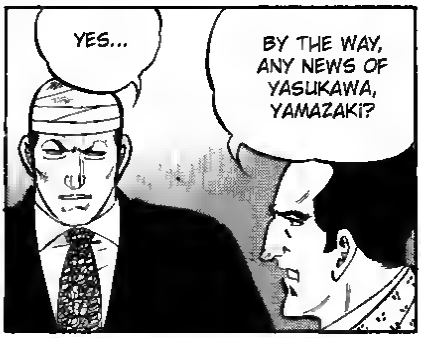
PRIME MINIS-TER'S OFFICE. PLAN D'S HEAD-QUAR-TERS.

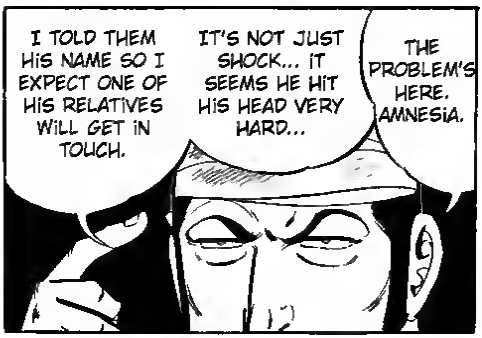

HE'S STILL IN THE DIET BUILDING.
KURIED
YUKINAGA
WHERE'S PROFES-SOR TADORO?
PLAN D'S NAKATA.

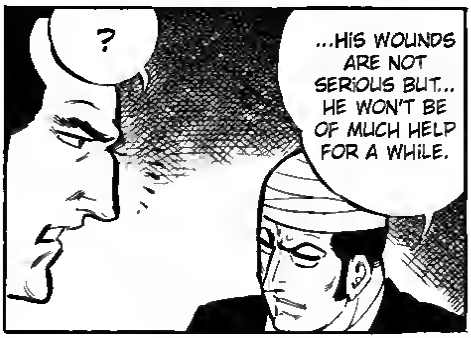

I SEE, INSTEAD OF TRYING TO CONVINCE THE PRIME MINISTER IT'D BE FASTER TO HAVE THE OLD MAN DO IT.
PROFESSOR TADORO'S GETTING VERY IMPATIENT. HE EVEN PROPOSED GOING TO SEE OLD MAN WATARI AT HIS PLACE IN HAKONE.

HE WANTS TO DISCUSS PLAN D'S SECOND STAGE DIRECTLY WITH THE PRIME MINISTER BUT THE MAN'S SO BUSY HE CAN'T EVEN TALK TO HIS SECRETARY.


I RAN INTO HIM AT A MEDICAL OUTPOST IN ICHIGAYA BY CHANCE.
IS HE ALL RIGHT?
WHERE'S HE?

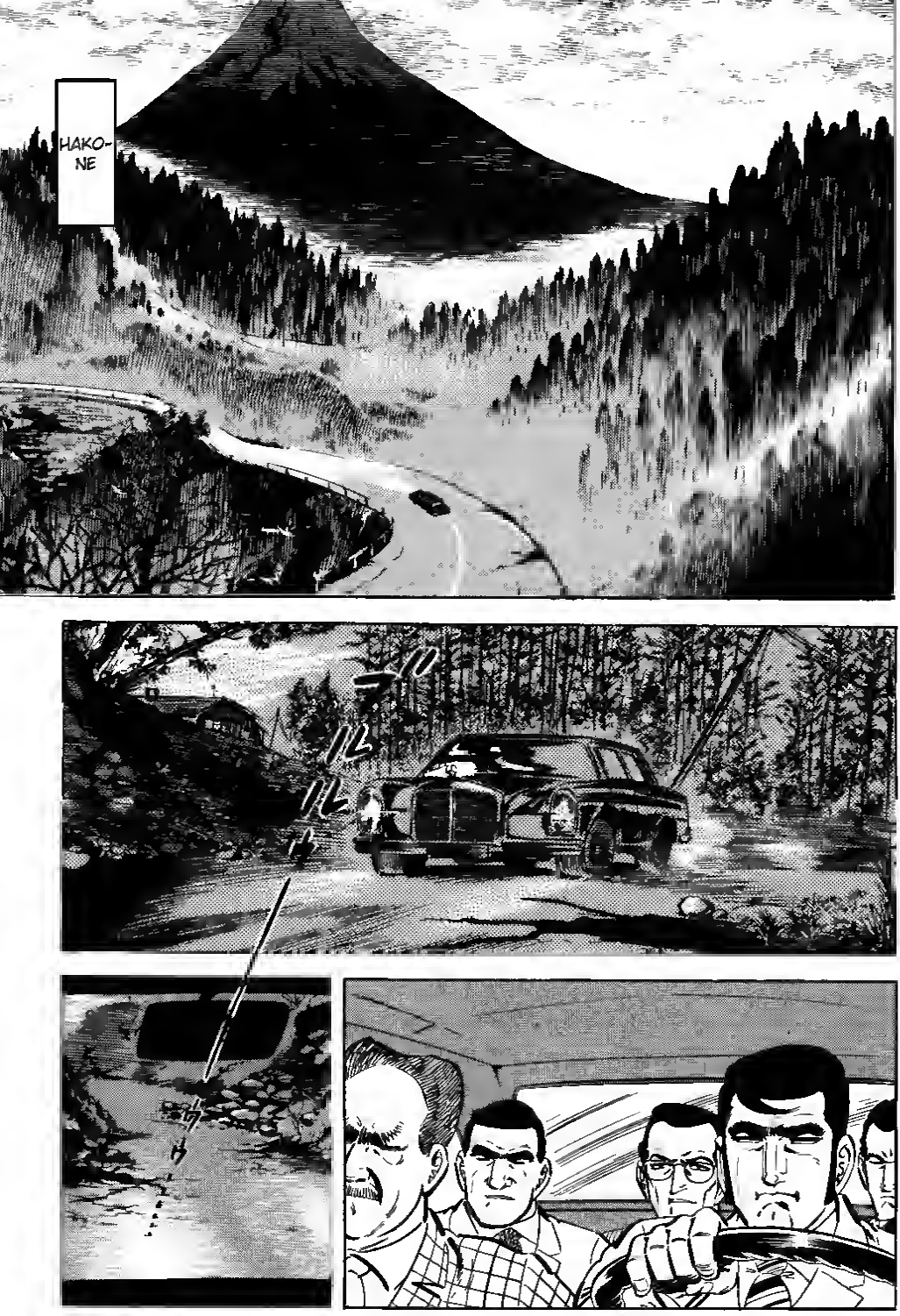

YES...
BY THE WAY, ANY NEWS OF YASUKAWA, YAMAZAKI?


I TOLD THEM HIS NAME SO I EXPECT ONE OF HIS RELATIVES WILL GET IN TOUCH.
IT'S NOT JUST SHOCK... IT SEEMS HE HIT HIS HEAD VERY HARD...
THE PROBLEM'S HERE. AMNESIA.


?
...HIS WOUNDS ARE NOT SERIOUS BUT.. HE WON'T BE OF MUCH HELP FOR A WHILE.

IT WILL BE FOUR, FIVE YEARS FROM NOW... POSSIBLY LONGER, RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT. BESIDES, IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN ANYTIME SOON, RIGHT?
HE'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO RECOVER.
NOT A BIG PROBLEM, IT LOOKS LIKE PLAN D WILL BE PUT ON THE BACK BURNER FOR A WHILE ANYWAY.
IT'S A ROUGH ESTIMATE. AND WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE WORST CASE.
ARE YOU... SERIOUS?
YOU MEAN... TWO YEARS?
ACCORDING TO A ROUGH ESTIMATE BASED ON THE SURVEY BY THE TAKATSUKI, IN THE WORST CASE... "D" COULD EQUAL 2.
WE DON'T REALLY KNOW...
I'M NOT SURE BUT... I TEND TO BELIEVE PROFESSOR TADORO'S PREDICTIONS MORE AND MORE.
WAS I WRONG, PROFESSOR YUKINAGA?
...HAD CONVINCED ME EVERYTHING WOULD BE OKAY FOR THE TIME BEING.
I'VE BEEN GOING OVER THE DATA MYSELF. THE VAST QUANTITY OF ENERGY RELEASED THROUGH THE LAST EARTHQUAKE...
THAT'S HARD TO BELIEVE ...
UNBELIEVABLE ...
EARTHQUAKES WILL OCCUR TOO, TO BE SURE, BUT THE REAL CHANGE IS TAKING PLACE DEEP DOWN...
IT'S A NEW KIND OF ALTERATION OF THE EARTH'S CRUST... ONE NEVER OBSERVED IN THE PAST.
WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT A NORMAL SEISMIC EVENT HERE.

AND WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO... OVER ONE HUNDRED MILLION JAPANESE... THEIR HOUSES... THEIR FACTORIES...?
...
IS IT TRUE? IS A... CHANGE MILLION TIMES VASTER IN SCALE THAN THE LAST QUAKE REALLY COMING?
JAPAN SINKING... I STILL CAN'T WRAP MY HEAD AROUND IT...
...EVEN IF IT MEANS WE'LL BE REMEMBERED AS FALSE PROPHETS OF DOOM AND WE'LL BE ACCUSED OF DELIBERATELY TRYING TO SCARE PEOPLE.
I HOPE THIS WHOLE THING WILL COME TO NOTHING...
...EXACTLY BECAUSE THEY DON'T BELIEVE ANYTHING LIKE THAT COULD EVER HAPPEN.
I BELIEVE THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE ARE GOING TO DIE...
...ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT, WE'RE IN A VERY AWKWARD POSITION.
THERE'S NO GLORY IN... PREDICTING MAYHEM.
...IF OUR PREDICTIONS WERE IN FACT CORRECT, NO ONE IN THEIR RIGHT MIND WOULD CALL US HEROES EITHER.
BUT... IF IT REALLY DID HAPPEN...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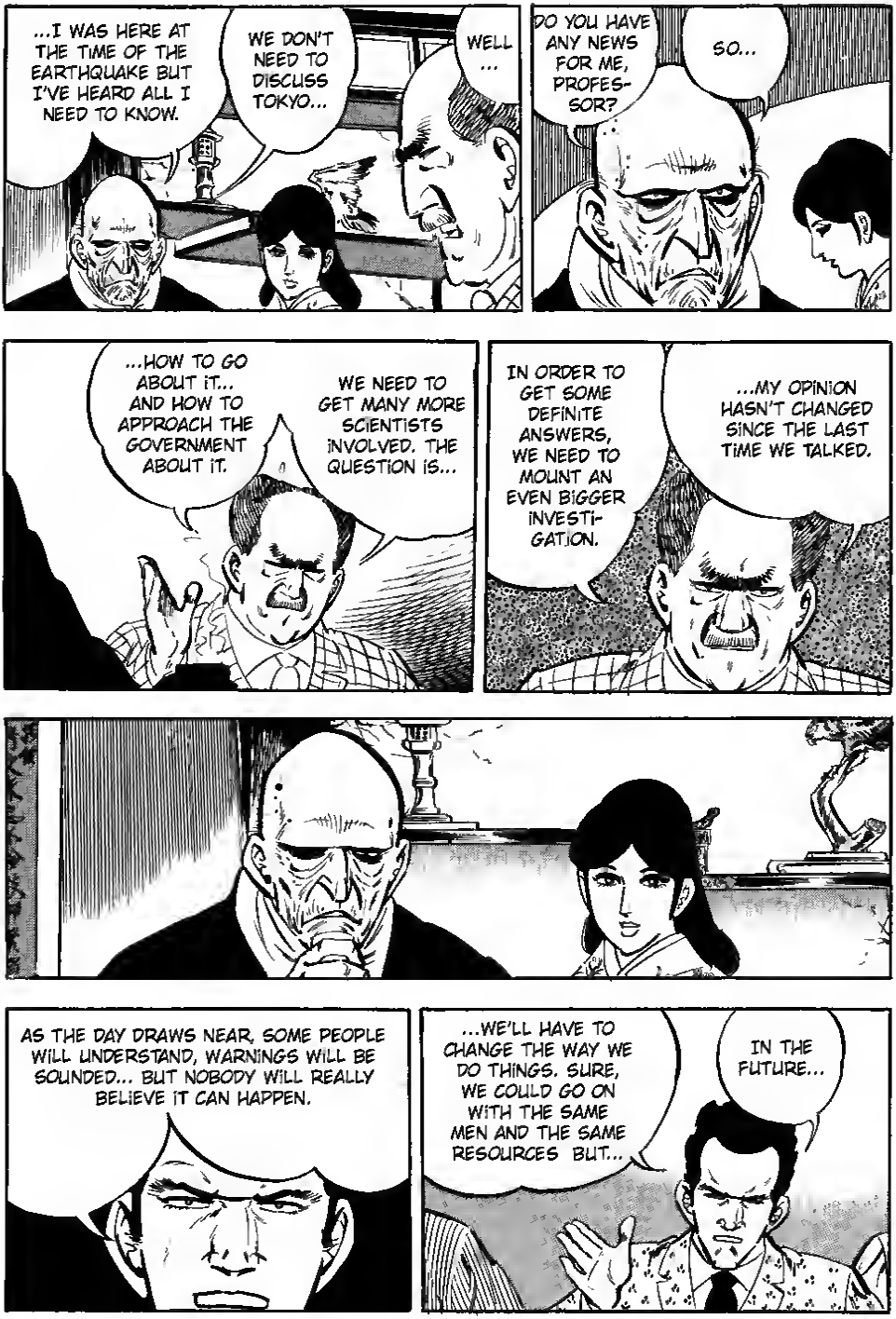
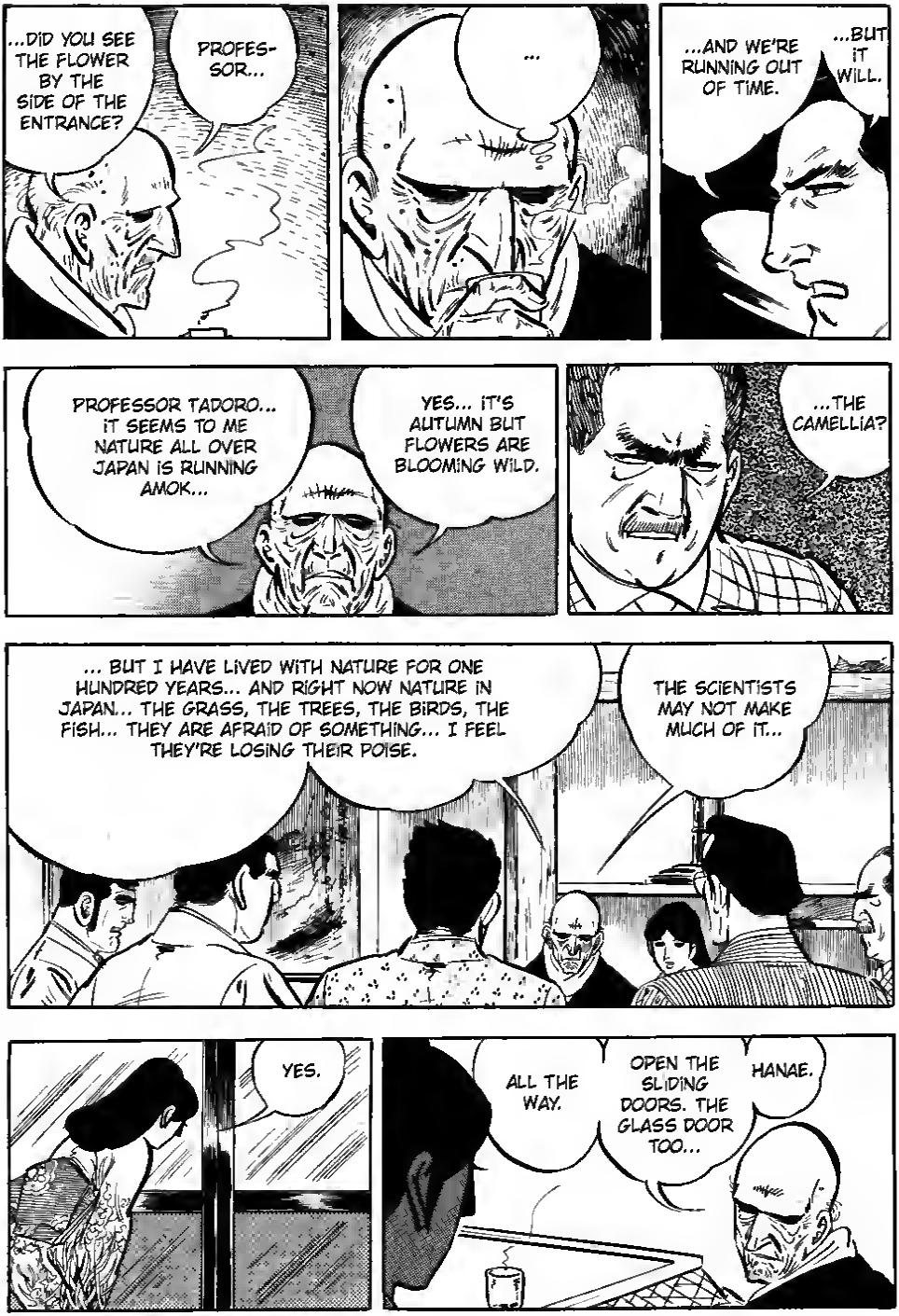
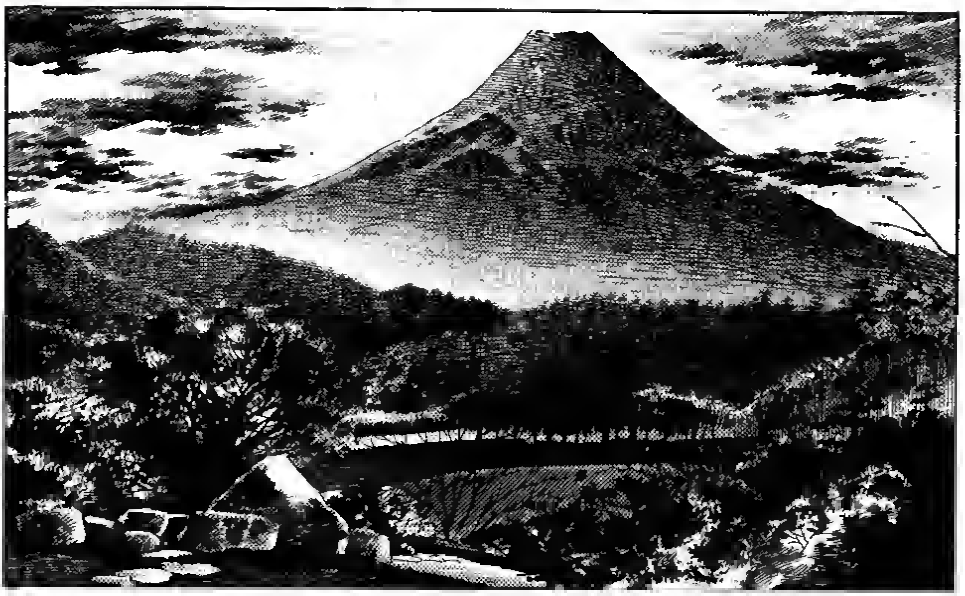
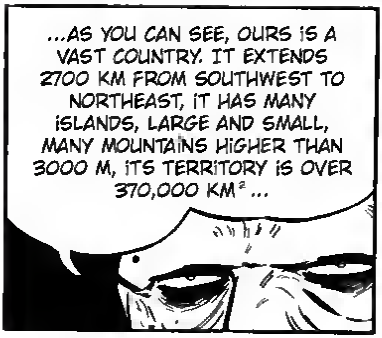
HAKONE IS COLD AS USUAL...
...COME IN, PLEASE.
WELCOME, GENTLE-MEN...
AT MY AGE, I CAN'T HELP BUT FIND THEM QUITE... GARISH...
DO YOU LIKE THE PAINTINGS OF THE SOUTHERN SCHOOL?
I SEE YOU GOT A FEW CRACKS TOO...


...I WAS HERE AT THE TIME OF THE EARTHQUAKE BUT I'VE HEARD ALL I NEED TO KNOW.
WE DON'T NEED TO DISCUSS TOKYO...
WELL ...
DO YOU HAVE ANY NEWS FOR ME, PROFESSOR?
SO...
...HOW TO GO ABOUT IT... AND HOW TO APPROACH THE GOVERNMENT ABOUT IT.
WE NEED TO GET MANY MORE SCIENTISTS INVOLVED. THE QUESTION IS...
IN ORDER TO GET SOME DEFINITE ANSWERS, WE NEED TO MOUNT AN EVEN BIGGER INVESTIGATION.
...MY OPINION HASN'T CHANGED SINCE THE LAST TIME WE TALKED.
AS THE DAY DRAWS NEAR, SOME PEOPLE WILL UNDERSTAND, WARNINGS WILL BE SOUNDED... BUT NOBODY WILL REALLY BELIEVE IT CAN HAPPEN.
...WE'LL HAVE TO CHANGE THE WAY WE DO THINGS. SURE, WE COULD GO ON WITH THE SAME MEN AND THE SAME RESOURCES BUT...
IN THE FUTURE...


...DID YOU SEE THE FLOWER BY THE SIDE OF THE ENTRANCE?
PROFES-SOR...
...
...AND WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME.
...BUT IT WILL.
PROFESSOR TADORO... IT SEEMS TO ME NATURE ALL OVER JAPAN IS RUNNING AMOK...
YES... IT'S AUTUMN BUT FLOWERS ARE BLOOMING WILD.
...THE CAMELLIA?
... BUT I HAVE LIVED WITH NATURE FOR ONE HUNDRED YEARS... AND RIGHT NOW NATURE IN JAPAN... THE GRASS, THE TREES, THE BIRDS, THE FISH... THEY ARE AFRAID OF SOMETHING... I FEEL THEY'RE LOSING THEIR POISE.
THE SCIENTISTS MAY NOT MAKE MUCH OF IT...
YES.
ALL THE WAY.
OPEN THE SLIDING DOORS. THE GLASS DOOR TOO...
HANAE.




...AS YOU CAN SEE, OURS IS A VAST COUNTRY. IT EXTENDS 2700 KM FROM SOUTHWEST TO NORTHEAST, IT HAS MANY ISLANDS, LARGE AND SMALL, MANY MOUNTAINS HIGHER THAN 3000 M, ITS TERRITORY IS OVER 370,000 KM²...

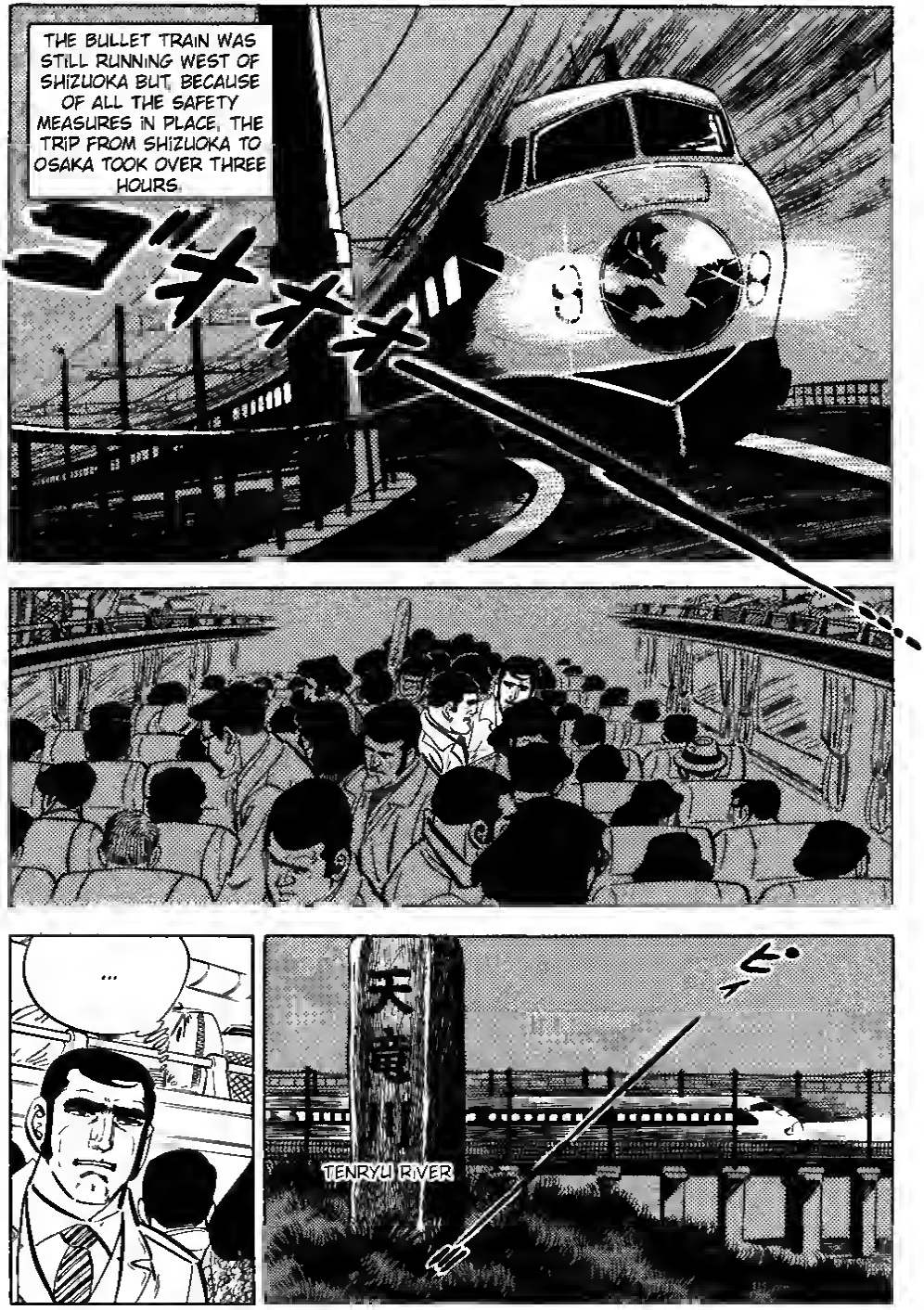
...LOOK AT THE MOUNTAINS AND THE LAKES OF JAPAN...
HAVE A GOOD LOOK, WILL YOU?
PROFES-SOR...

YES, I AM.
ARE YOU REALLY CONVINCED THAT IN THE NEAR FUTURE IT COULD BE SWALLOWED BY THE SEA?
...DO YOU STILL BELIEVE THAT THIS JAPAN OF OURS, THIS HUGE ISLAND... IS GOING TO SINK?
...110 MILLION PEOPLE LIVE HERE, OUR GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT IS THE THIRD IN THE WORLD...
...
AND THE MORE I INVESTIGATE, THE STRONGER MY BELIEF.
YOU CAN CLOSE THE DOOR, HANAE.
THAT'S WHAT I WANTED TO HEAR.
GOOD.
IT'S COMING!
TWEET! TWEET!

EEEK!
NO! IT'S MORE DANGEROUS OUTSIDE!
THERE'S NO REASON TO WORRY.
...HAKONE AND TANAZAWA SUNK SLIGHTLY AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE IN TOKYO AND ARE NOW COMING UP AGAIN TO... RESTORE THE EQUILIBRIUM.
IT'S OKAY...

...
... WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT ...?
SO... HAVE YOU GIVEN SOME THOUGHT ABOUT...
THE EARTHQUAKE... IS IT OVER...?
NAKATA... IS THAT YOUR NAME?
WE HAVEN'T WORKED OUT ALL THE DETAILS YET, BUT THE GENERAL OUTLINE IS CLEAR...
WE HAVE A PLAN...
I CAN GO...
AND I ALSO WANT SOMEONE TO GO TO KYOTO FOR ME.
I'M GOING TO MEET THE PRIME MINISTER TOMORROW...
...HAVE IT READY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

I WANT YOU TO GIVE HIM A LETTER FROM ME, EXPLAIN THE SITUATION AND ASK FOR HIS HELP.
...THERE'S A SCIENTIST IN KYOTO NAMED FUKUHARA. HE'S STILL YOUNG, BUT IF YOU READ HIS WRITING YOU'LL UNDERSTAND HE'S A TRUE SCHOLAR.
TAKE KUNIEDA WITH YOU, THEN.
...THE OPINION OF A SCHOLAR FROM KYOTO.
TOMORROW I WILL INSTRUCT YOU ABOUT WHAT TO SAY. IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE HIS OPINION ON THIS MATTER...
YES, SIR.
...THEY ARE NOT INCLINED TO THINK OUT A PROBLEM IN ALL ITS RAMIFICATIONS.
...THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY IN TOKYO HAS A TENDENCY TO FOLLOW THE LATEST TRENDS...


THE BULLET TRAIN WAS STILL RUNNING WEST OF SHIZUOKA BUT, BECAUSE OF ALL THE SAFETY MEASURES IN PLACE, THE TRIP FROM SHIZUOKA TO OSAKA TOOK OVER THREE HOURS.
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...
天竜川
TENRYU RIVER

...THE LAST TIME I MET HIM I WAS ON MY WAY TO CONDUCT THE FIRST JAPAN TRENCH SURVEY... THAT'S WHEN IT ALL STARTED...
...IT WAS ALONG THE TENRYU RIVER THAT HE TOOK HIS LIFE...
...ROKURO GO...
AT FIRST, I SUSPECTED HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN KILLED TO COVER UP THE PROBLEMS THAT PLAGUED THE WHOLE PROJECT... BUT NOW I KNOW EXACTLY WHY HE KILLED HIMSELF...
...HE'D BEEN INVESTIGATING THE INCONSISTENCY IN THE SURVEY MEASUREMENTS FOR THE BULLET TRAIN LINE... SOON AFTER HE COMMITTED SUICIDE FOR NO APPARENT REASON.
...AND HE KNEW HE WOULD NEVER BE FORGIVEN FOR DISCLOSING THE BULLET TRAIN LINE FIASCO TO THE WORLD... THE PRESSURE MUST'VE DRIVEN HIM OVER THE EDGE...
...BUT HE WAS PAINFULLY AWARE THAT, HAD HE REVEALED WHAT HE KNEW, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN DISMISSED AS A FOOL...
ROKURO... BASED ON DETAILED CALCULATIONS, MUST'VE REALIZED, AT LEAST PARTIALLY, THAT JAPAN WAS SINKING...
IS THAT WHAT'S TROUBLING YOU...?
THEY SAY KYOTO HAS ALMOST COMPLETELY RECOVERED FROM LAST YEAR'S QUAKE...
... NOTHING IMPORTANT.
WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND...?

...BACK THEN, I WAS BLISSFULLY IGNORANT OF WHAT THE FUTURE HAD IN STORE FOR ALL OF US...
...IT SEEMS SO LONG AGO...
...AND NOW...
I REMEMBER YOU WERE THERE AT THE TIME... AND THAT YOU LEFT YOUR FIRM WHILE EVERYONE ASSUMED YOU WERE DEAD...
BUT NOW... I'M ONE OF THE VERY FEW PEOPLE IN THE WORLD TO KNOW THE TERRIBLE TRUTH ABOUT JAPAN.
...JUST LIKE ALL THESE PEOPLE...
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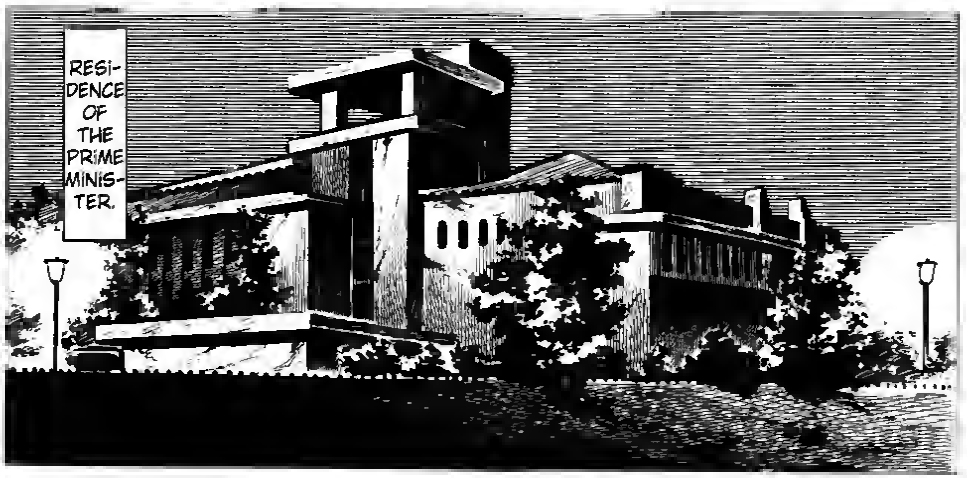
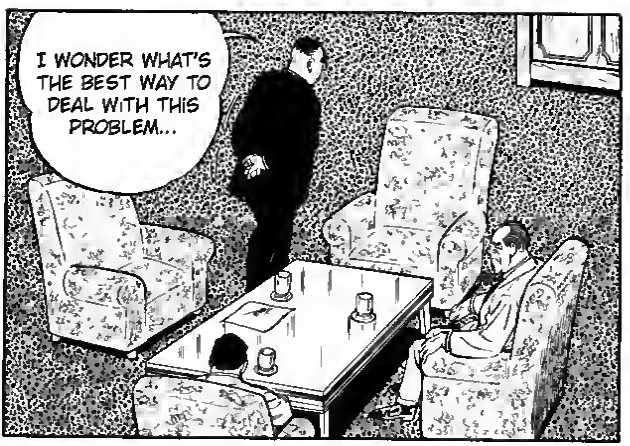
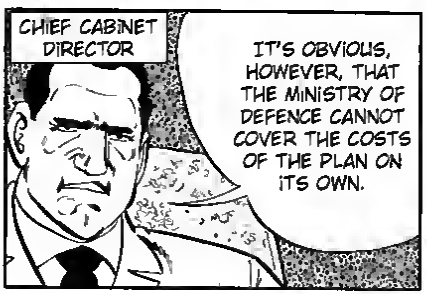
FUKU-
HARA
...SHOCKING...
JUST
SHOCKING...
...HE MUTTERS
"SHOCKING...
SHOCKING!" AND THEN
HE GOES AND TAKES A
NAP!
WE COME ALL
THE WAY FROM
TOKYO TO GIVE
HIM SOME VITAL
NEWS...
WELL, A
PROFESSOR OF
COMPARATIVE
CIVILIZATION
HAS A RIGHT
TO BE... A BIT
ECCENTRIC.
...IS THIS
WHAT KYOTO
SCHOLARS ARE
FAMOUS FOR?
...MAKE FOOLS
OF PEOPLE?

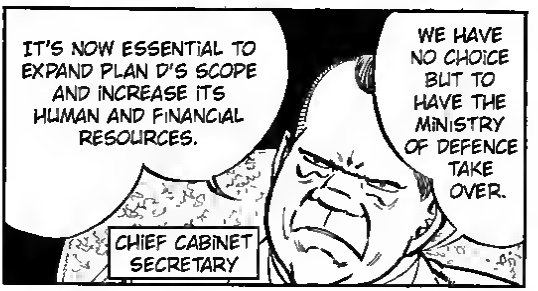
Chapter 6: The sinking country.



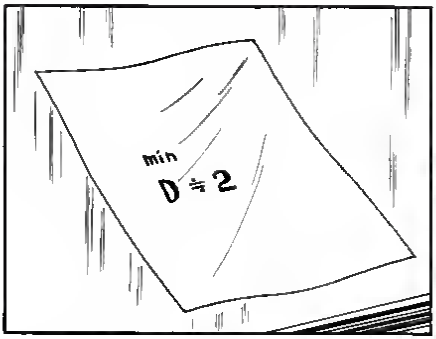
IF THE INVESTIGATION IS TO ADVANCE TO THE NEXT STAGE, THEY WILL NEED A BUDGET IN THE ORDER OF SEVERAL THOUSAND BILLION YEN...
PRIME MINISTER






IT'S NOW ESSENTIAL TO EXPAND PLAN D'S SCOPE AND INCREASE ITS HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES.
WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO HAVE THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE TAKE OVER.
CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY

AND TO DO THIS WE'LL NEED TO RECRUIT A LARGE NUMBER OF SCIENTISTS... WHERE WILL WE FIND THEM?
...WE MUST DO EXTENSIVE RESEARCH ON WHEN AND HOW IT'S GOING TO BE CARRIED OUT.
BESIDES, IN ORDER TO COME UP WITH A SATISFACTORY EVACUATION PLAN...
BUT HOW COULD WE JUSTIFY EXCEEDING THE BUDGET OR... THE LIMITED SECRET FUNDS ?
ANYWAY, YOU CAN BE SURE THAT SOMEONE IN THE METEOROLOGICAL AGENCY, IN THE GEOGRAPHICAL SURVEY INSTITUTE OR IN THE EARTHQUAKE RESEARCH INSTITUTE, DISASTER PREVENTION CENTRE WILL SOON GET WIND OF IT...
...WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DISCLOSE SOME OF THE INFORMATION AND REQUEST THEIR COOPERATION.
THE JAPAN SCIENCE COUNCIL HAS TO BE BROUGHT IN...
MOREOVER, THE WHOLE THING IS SO ABSURD... EVEN IF SOMEBODY SUSPECTED SOMETHING, THEY WOULD DOUBT THEIR OWN SANITY...
HARD TO SAY... THEY'RE PROBABLY TOO ABSORBED BY THE NEXT EARTHQUAKE...
I'M NOT TOTALLY CONVINCED, MYSELF. TO BE ABSOLUTELY HONEST... I DON'T REALLY BELIEVE IT.
...FEARING THEY WOULD BE CONSIDERED CRAZY.
...AND THEY WOULD REFRAIN FROM TELLING OTHER PEOPLE...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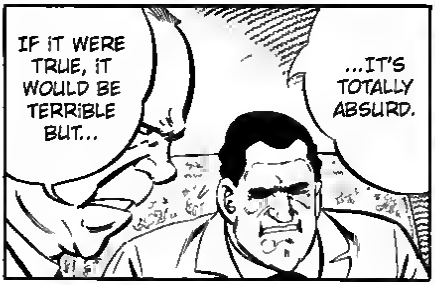
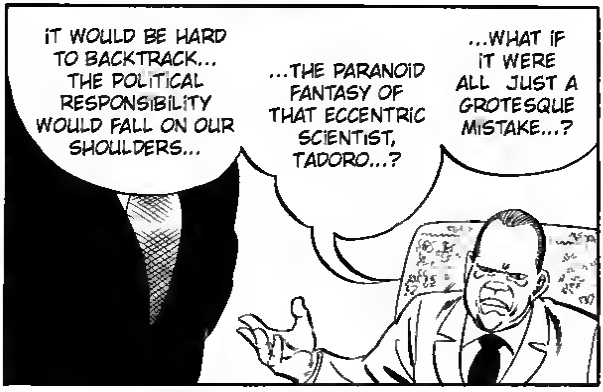
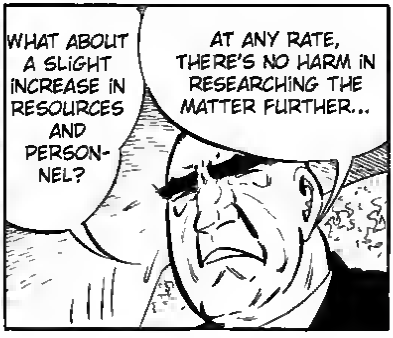
I KNOW WE'RE A VOLCANIC COUNTRY WITH A SERIOUS EARTHQUAKE PROBLEM BUT STILL... SUCH A VAST COUNTRY... IN SUCH A SHORT TIME...
I STILL THINK THIS WHOLE STORY IS PREPOS-TEROUS.

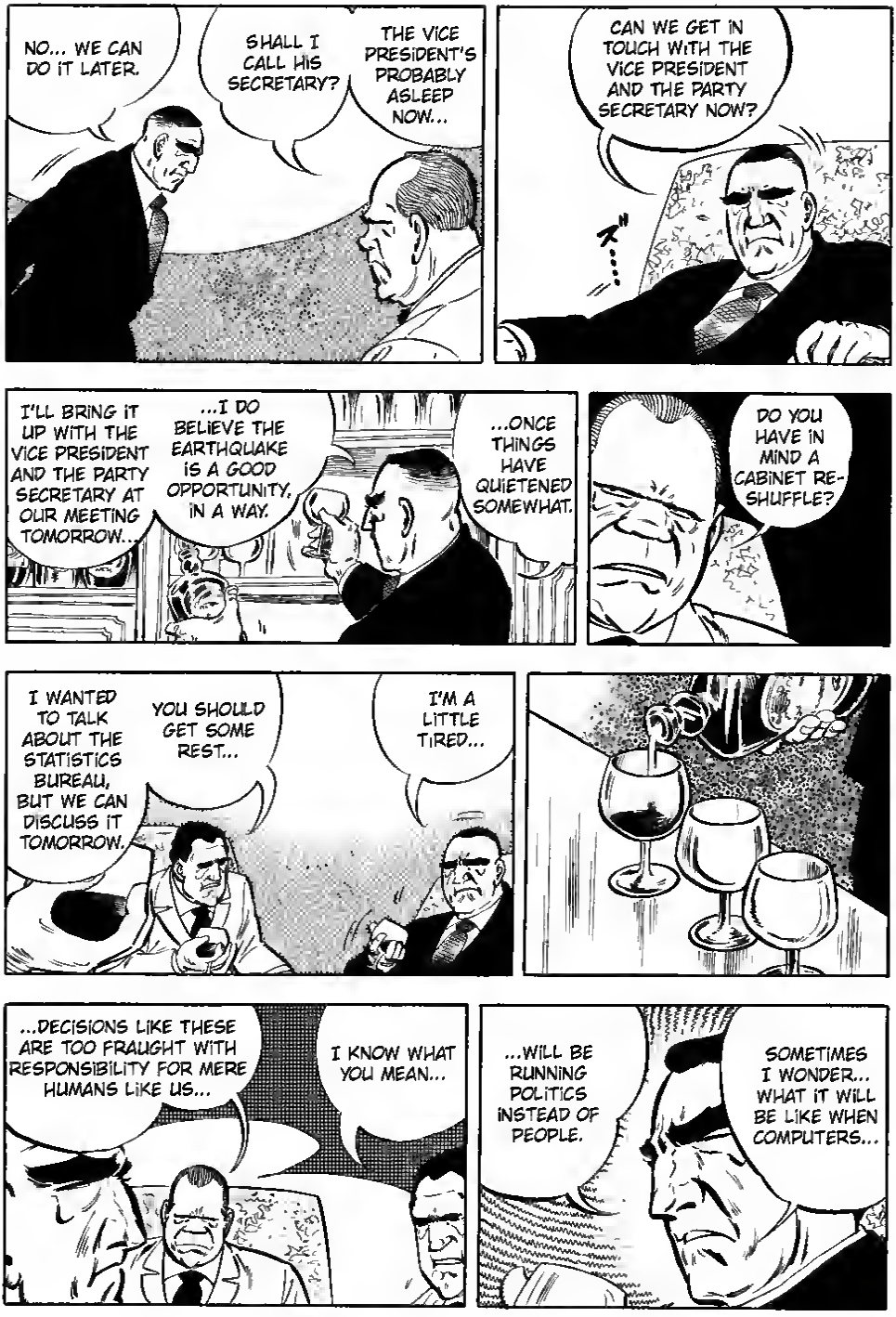

IF IT WERE TRUE, IT WOULD BE TERRIBLE BUT...
...IT'S TOTALLY ABSURD.

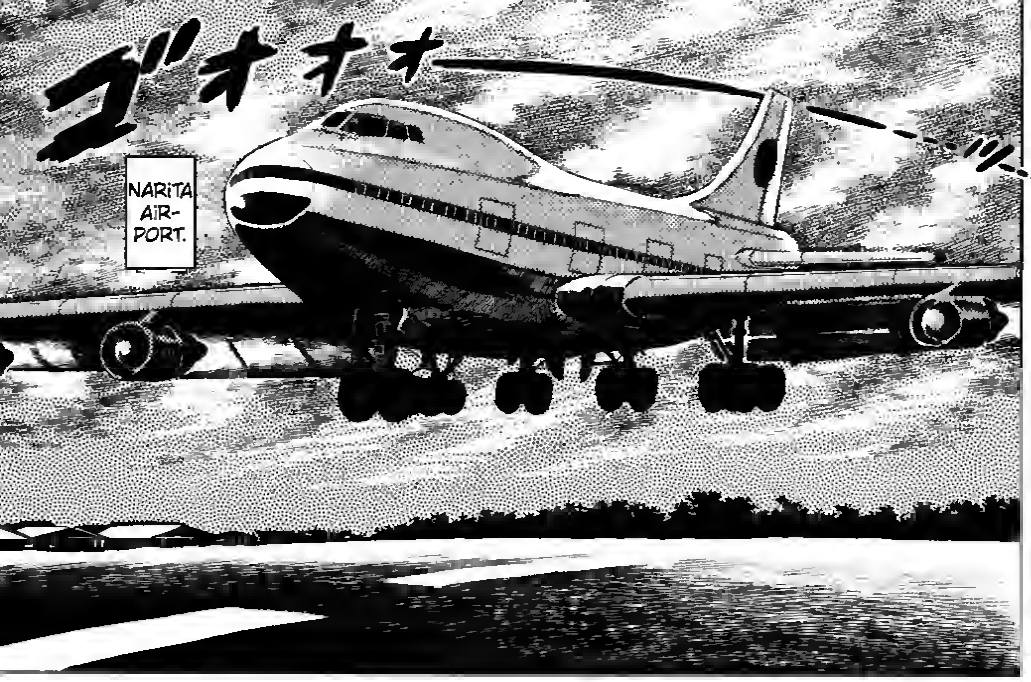
...AND THE COSTS WOULD BE PAID NOT ONLY BY YOU BUT BY THE WHOLE PARTY.


IT WOULD BE HARD TO BACKTRACK... THE POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY WOULD FALL ON OUR SHOULDERS...
...THE PARANOID FANTASY OF THAT ECCENTRIC SCIENTIST, TADORO...?
...WHAT IF IT WERE ALL JUST A GROTESQUE MISTAKE...?

...YES.
ARE YOU REALLY CONVINCED IT'S THE BEST COURSE...?


WHAT ABOUT A SLIGHT INCREASE IN RESOURCES AND PERSON-NEL?
AT ANY RATE, THERE'S NO HARM IN RESEARCHING THE MATTER FURTHER...


NO... WE CAN DO IT LATER.
SHALL I CALL HIS SECRETARY?
THE VICE PRESIDENT'S PROBABLY ASLEEP NOW...
CAN WE GET IN TOUCH WITH THE VICE PRESIDENT AND THE PARTY SECRETARY NOW?
ズ....
I'LL BRING IT UP WITH THE VICE PRESIDENT AND THE PARTY SECRETARY AT OUR MEETING TOMORROW...
...I DO BELIEVE THE EARTHQUAKE IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY, IN A WAY.
...ONCE THINGS HAVE QUIETENED SOMEWHAT.
DO YOU HAVE IN MIND A CABINET RE-SHUFFLE?
I WANTED TO TALK ABOUT THE STATISTICS BUREAU, BUT WE CAN DISCUSS IT TOMORROW.
YOU SHOULD GET SOME REST...
I'M A LITTLE TIRED...
...DECISIONS LIKE THESE ARE TOO FRAUGHT WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR MERE HUMANS LIKE US...
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN...
...WILL BE RUNNING POLITICS INSTEAD OF PEOPLE.
SOMETIMES I WONDER... WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE WHEN COMPUTERS...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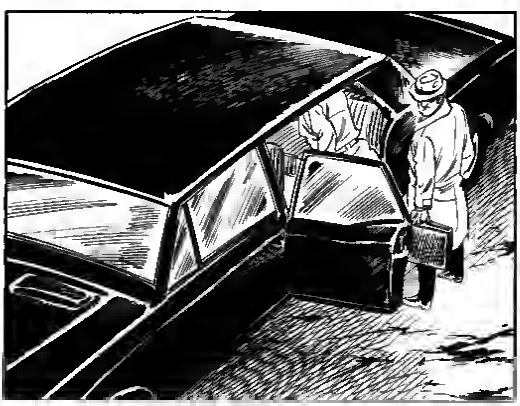
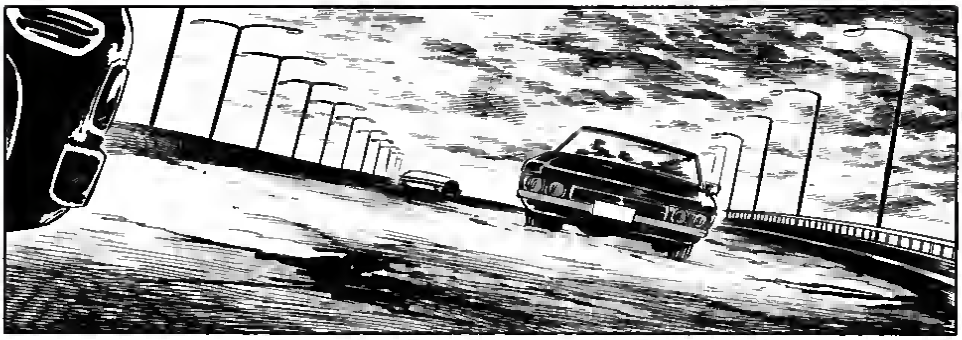
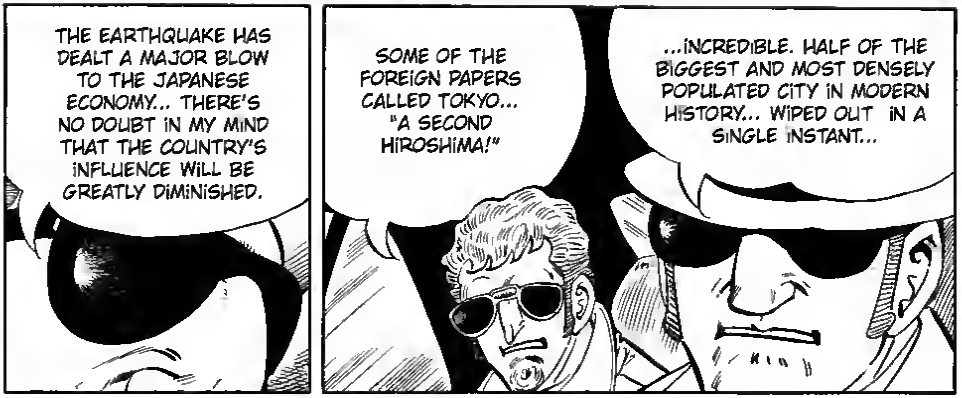
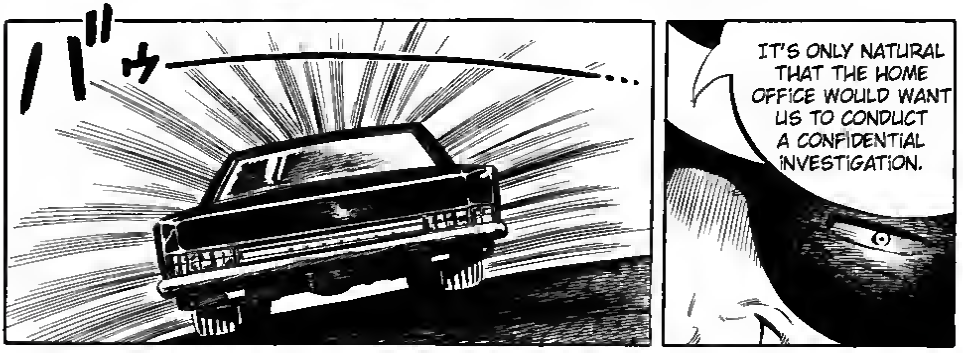
NARITA AIR-PORT.



WHILE HANEDA AIRPORT REMAINED CLOSED, NARITA AIRPORT, WHICH HAD SUFFERED A LESSER DEGREE OF DAMAGE, HAD ALREADY PARTLY RESUMED INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS...




THE EARTHQUAKE HAS DEALT A MAJOR BLOW TO THE JAPANESE ECONOMY... THERE'S NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT THE COUNTRY'S INFLUENCE WILL BE GREATLY DIMINISHED.
SOME OF THE FOREIGN PAPERS CALLED TOKYO... "A SECOND HIROSHIMA!"
...INCREDIBLE. HALF OF THE BIGGEST AND MOST DENSELY POPULATED CITY IN MODERN HISTORY... WIPED OUT IN A SINGLE INSTANT...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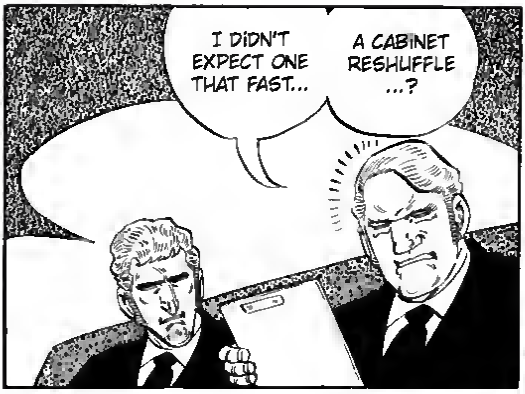
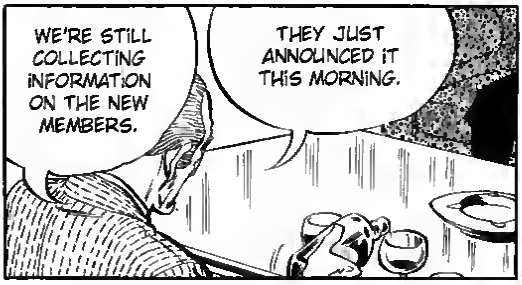
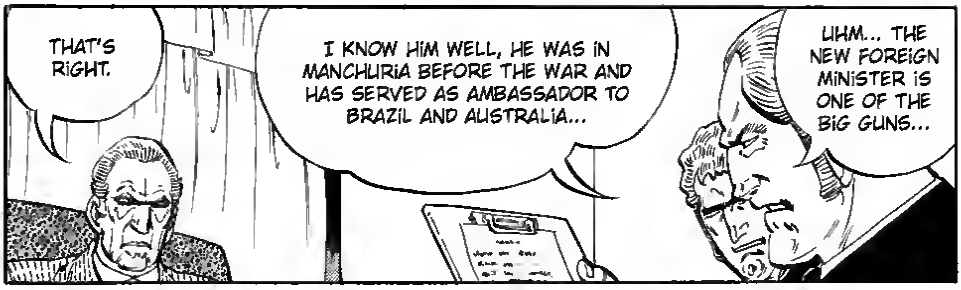
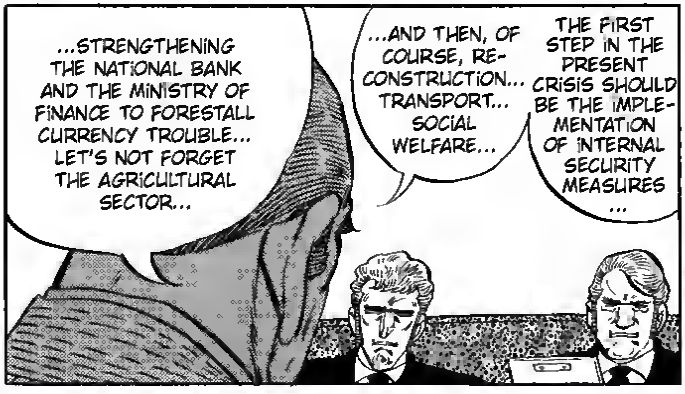
IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT THE HOME OFFICE WOULD WANT US TO CONDUCT A CONFIDENTIAL INVESTIGATION.

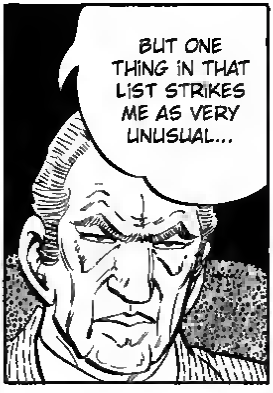

I DIDN'T EXPECT ONE THAT FAST...
A CABINET RESHUFFLE ...?

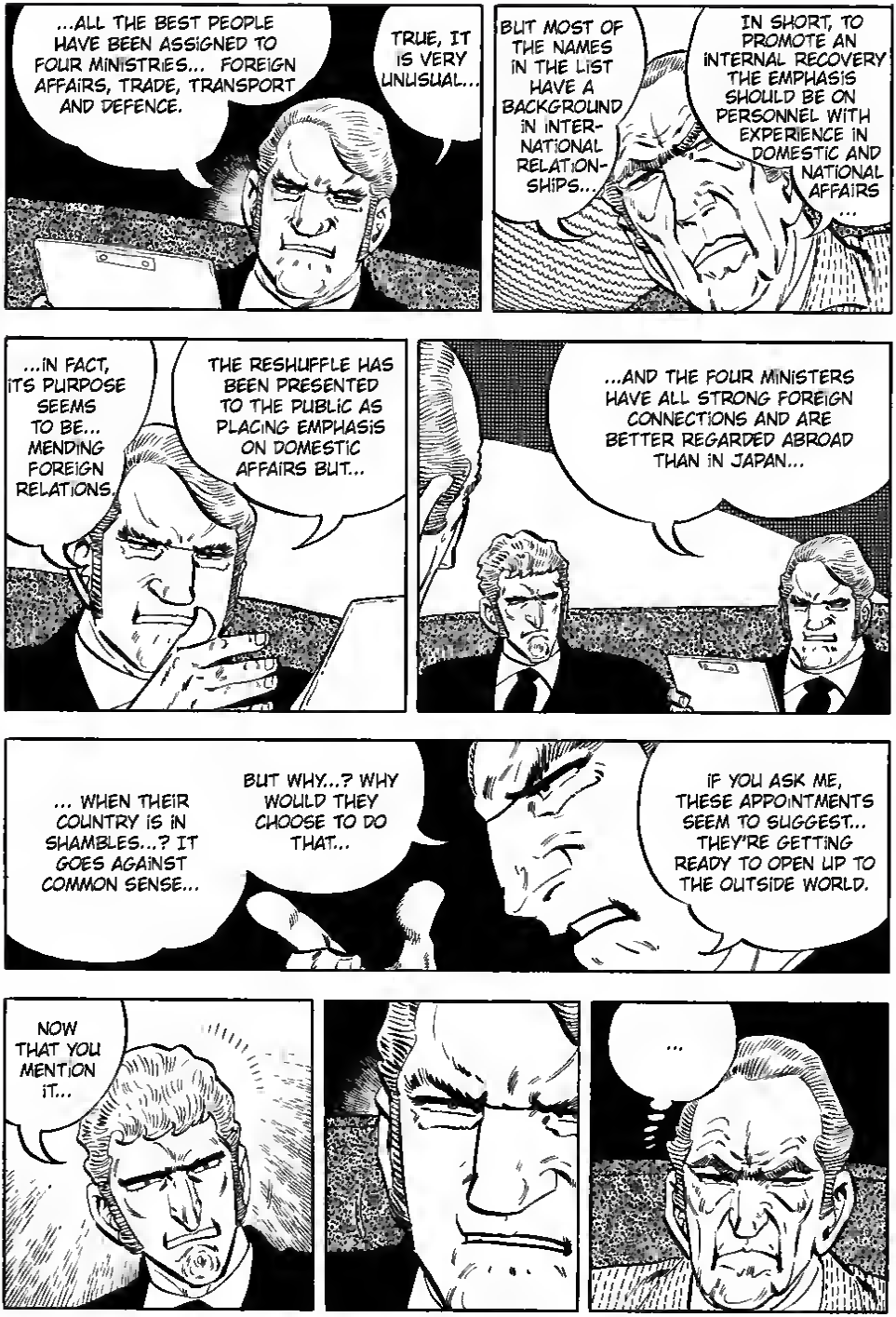

WE'RE STILL COLLECTING INFORMATION ON THE NEW MEMBERS.
THEY JUST ANNOUNCED IT THIS MORNING.

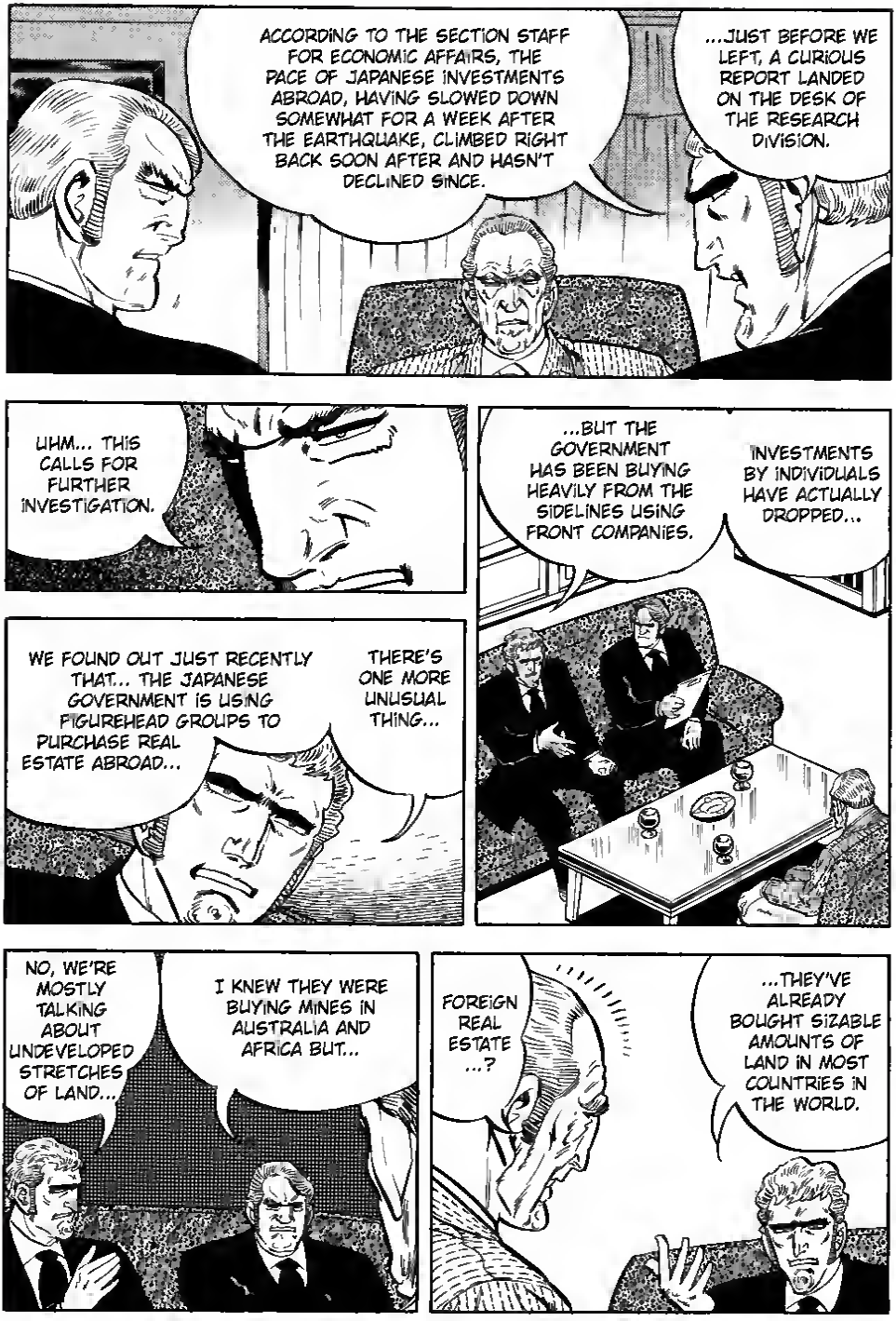
THE EMBASSY OF AN UNKNOWN FOREIGN POWER.


THAT'S RIGHT.
I KNOW HIM WELL, HE WAS IN MANCHURIA BEFORE THE WAR AND HAS SERVED AS AMBASSADOR TO BRAZIL AND AUSTRALIA...
UHM... THE NEW FOREIGN MINISTER IS ONE OF THE BIG GUNS...

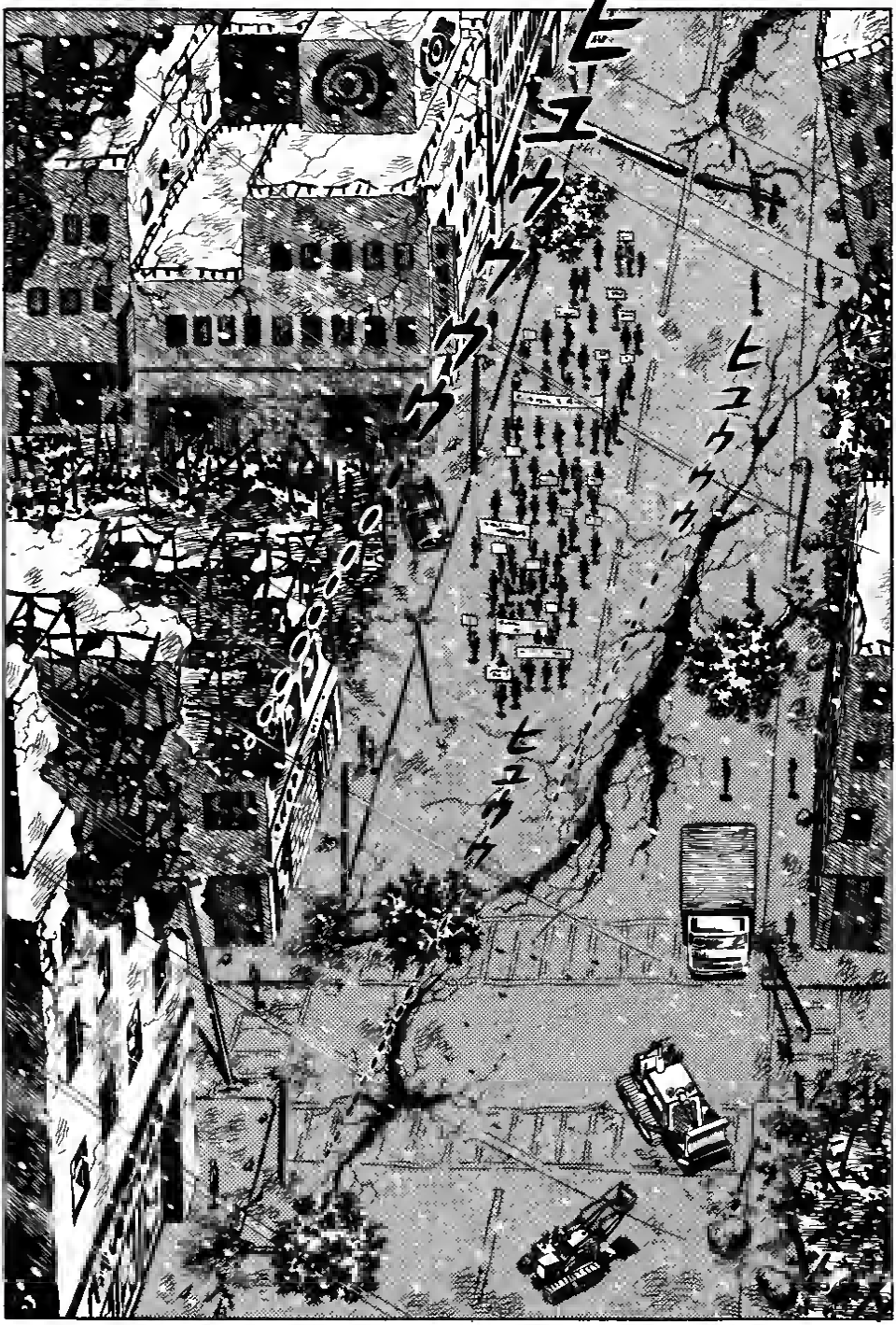

...STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL BANK AND THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE TO FORESTALL CURRENCY TROUBLE... LET'S NOT FORGET THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR...
...AND THEN, OF COURSE, RE-CONSTRUCTION... TRANSPORT... SOCIAL WELFARE...
THE FIRST STEP IN THE PRESENT CRISIS SHOULD BE THE IMPLE-MENTATION OF INTERNAL SECURITY MEASURES ...


BUT ONE THING IN THAT LIST STRIKES ME AS VERY UNUSUAL...


...ALL THE BEST PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO FOUR MINISTRIES... FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE, TRANSPORT AND DEFENCE.
TRUE, IT IS VERY UNUSUAL...
BUT MOST OF THE NAMES IN THE LIST HAVE A BACKGROUND IN INTER-NATIONAL RELATION-SHIPS...
IN SHORT, TO PROMOTE AN INTERNAL RECOVERY THE EMPHASIS SHOULD BE ON PERSONNEL WITH EXPERIENCE IN DOMESTIC AND NATIONAL AFFAIRS ...
...IN FACT, ITS PURPOSE SEEMS TO BE... MENDING FOREIGN RELATIONS.
THE RESHUFFLE HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC AS PLACING EMPHASIS ON DOMESTIC AFFAIRS BUT...
...AND THE FOUR MINISTERS HAVE ALL STRONG FOREIGN CONNECTIONS AND ARE BETTER REGARDED ABROAD THAN IN JAPAN...
... WHEN THEIR COUNTRY IS IN SHAMBLES...? IT GOES AGAINST COMMON SENSE...
BUT WHY...? WHY WOULD THEY CHOOSE TO DO THAT...
IF YOU ASK ME, THESE APPOINTMENTS SEEM TO SUGGEST... THEY'RE GETTING READY TO OPEN UP TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...
...


ACCORDING TO THE SECTION STAFF FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, THE PACE OF JAPANESE INVESTMENTS ABROAD, HAVING SLOWED DOWN SOMEWHAT FOR A WEEK AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE, CLIMBED RIGHT BACK SOON AFTER AND HASN'T DECLINED SINCE.
...JUST BEFORE WE LEFT, A CURIOUS REPORT LANDED ON THE DESK OF THE RESEARCH DIVISION.
UHM... THIS CALLS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION.
...BUT THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN BUYING HEAVILY FROM THE SIDELINES USING FRONT COMPANIES.
INVESTMENTS BY INDIVIDUALS HAVE ACTUALLY DROPPED...
WE FOUND OUT JUST RECENTLY THAT... THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT IS USING FIGUREHEAD GROUPS TO PURCHASE REAL ESTATE ABROAD...
THERE'S ONE MORE UNUSUAL THING...
NO, WE'RE MOSTLY TALKING ABOUT UNDEVELOPED STRETCHES OF LAND...
I KNEW THEY WERE BUYING MINES IN AUSTRALIA AND AFRICA BUT...
FOREIGN REAL ESTATE ...?
...THEY'VE ALREADY BOUGHT SIZABLE AMOUNTS OF LAND IN MOST COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD.

NO, AMBASSADOR, LISTEN TO THIS...
ARE THEY FORESEEING A POPULATION INCREASE...?
A NEW... IMMIGRATION DRIVE...?
WE DEFINITELY NEED TO FIND OUT MORE.
UHM... THERE'S SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS ABOUT THE WHOLE THING...
...IN THE PAST TWO YEARS THE JAPANESE POPULATION HAS ACTUALLY BEEN DECREASING.
I'VE LIVED HERE FOR HALF A CENTURY NOW BUT... THERE ARE STILL A LOT OF THINGS I DON'T UNDERSTAND ABOUT THEIR WAY OF THINKING...
...HAVE IN MIND, I WONDER...
WHAT DO THE JAPANESE...
...I WONDER WHAT.
...THERE MUST BE A SERIOUS REASON BEHIND THE GOVERNMENT'S RECENT MOVES...
...THEY ARE DEFINITELY UP TO SOMETHING...
VERY UNUSUAL...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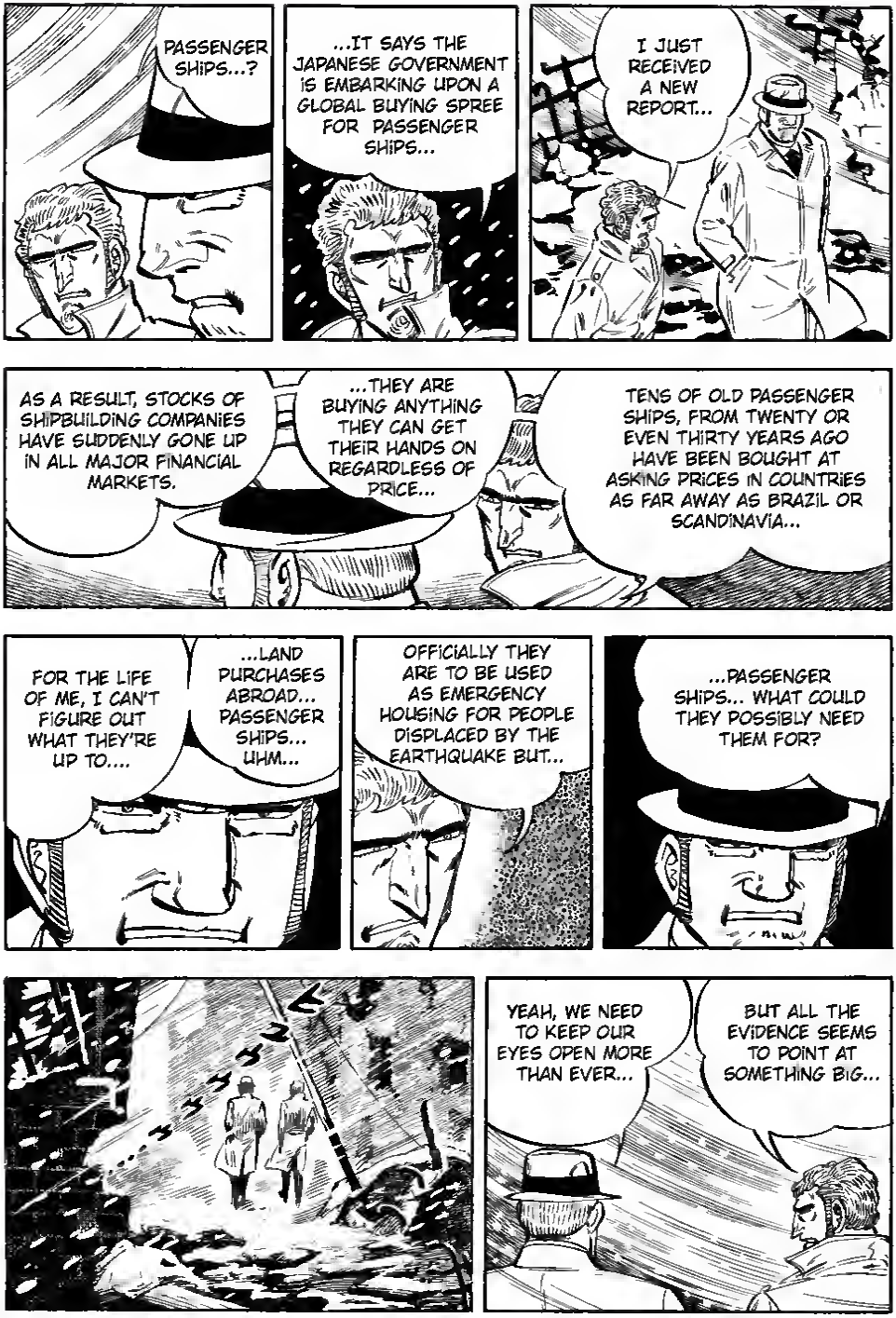
GIVE US HOUSES
住宅を
よこせ!!
DO SOMETHING!
なんとか!!
MONEY FOR THE WINTER
越冬資金
政府
ビルを開放せよ
WE NEED MONEY
OPEN UP YOUR BUILDINGS!


PASSENGER SHIPS...?
...IT SAYS THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT IS EMBARKING UPON A GLOBAL BUYING SPREE FOR PASSENGER SHIPS...
I JUST RECEIVED A NEW REPORT...
AS A RESULT, STOCKS OF SHIPBUILDING COMPANIES HAVE SUDDENLY GONE UP IN ALL MAJOR FINANCIAL MARKETS.
...THEY ARE BUYING ANYTHING THEY CAN GET THEIR HANDS ON REGARDLESS OF PRICE...
TENS OF OLD PASSENGER SHIPS, FROM TWENTY OR EVEN THIRTY YEARS AGO HAVE BEEN BOUGHT AT ASKING PRICES IN COUNTRIES AS FAR AWAY AS BRAZIL OR SCANDINAVIA...
FOR THE LIFE OF ME, I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT THEY'RE UP TO....
...LAND PURCHASES ABROAD... PASSENGER SHIPS... UHM...
OFFICIALLY THEY ARE TO BE USED AS EMERGENCY HOUSING FOR PEOPLE DISPLACED BY THE EARTHQUAKE BUT...
...PASSENGER SHIPS... WHAT COULD THEY POSSIBLY NEED THEM FOR?
YEAH, WE NEED TO KEEP OUR EYES OPEN MORE THAN EVER...
BUT ALL THE EVIDENCE SEEMS TO POINT AT SOMETHING BIG...

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JAPAN COAST GUARD
海上保安庁
IT ALMOST FEELS AS IF... THEY SENSE SOMETHING...
DID YOU SEE THE DEMONSTRATION?
HELLO.
HI THERE, ONODERA.
PLAN D'S KATAOKA
I WONDER HOW MUCH LONGER BEFORE THE PRESS FINDS OUT...
THE COUNTRY WOULD PLUNGE INTO PANIC.
HOW DO YOU THINK THEY WOULD REACT IF THEY KNEW THAT... IT HAS NOW A 50% PROBABILITY OF OCCURRING?
OUR PEOPLE CAN BE VERY PERCEPTIVE...
...RUMOURS ARE ALREADY FLYING AROUND THE CITY...
DO YOU REALLY THINK WE CAN KEEP A LID ON IT?
SHOULD WE TAKE SOME ACTIONS BEFORE IT LEAKS TO THE PAPERS...?
...OF COURSE HE DIDN'T GET TO TALK TO ANY OF THE MEMBERS OF PLAN D BUT...
THIS MORNING A REPORTER SHOWED UP AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE...

THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE. THE SEIRYU MARU WILL CALL IN AT YOKOSUKA AT EIGHTEEN HUNDRED HOURS.
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.
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...THE AMERICAN NAVY BEAT US TO IT.
UNFORTUNATELY WE WERE NOT ABLE TO CHARTER THE SEA LAB AND THE SUB FROM DEEPCO...
BY THE FOLLOWING DAY, WE'LL HAVE ALL THE PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT ON BOARD.
GREAT.
...MY OLD FIRM...
... THE WADATSUMI 2... DEEP-SEA ENTERPRISES.....
BUT, ON A POSITIVE NOTE, WE CONVINCED DEEP-SEA ENTERPRISES TO LET US CHARTER THEIR WADATSUMI 2 AND A SEA LAB.
WELL, THAT'S MY GUESS...
AND WASN'T DEEPCO'S SUB ENGAGED IN AN OIL-DRILLING OPERATION IN THE MARIANAS? IS THE NAVY GOING TO USE IT IN THE PACIFIC REGION?
WHY DOES THE U.S. NAVY NEED A DEEP-SEA SUB?
...
AAAAA

...
ONE OF DEEPCO'S ENGINEERS MENTIONED AN EMERGENCY INVESTIGATION IN JAPANESE COASTAL WATERS... I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF THEY WANTED TO INVESTIGATE THE EFFECTS OF EARTHQUAKES ON THE NAVIGATIONAL AIDS OF THEIR POLARIS SUBMARINE...
THEY SAID THAT A VESSEL WITH THE SEVENTH FLEET CAME TO PICK IT UP TWO OR THREE DAYS AGO...
DO YOU THINK... THEY MAY HAVE FOUND OUT...?
...THE ALTERATIONS ON THE OCEAN FLOOR, IT WOULD TAKE THEM TIME TO ASSEMBLE ALL THE PIECES...
EVEN IF THEY KNEW ABOUT...
...THEY'VE CONDUCTED SO MANY STRATEGIC SURVEYS...!
I MEAN... THEY KNOW JAPANESE COASTAL WATERS EVEN BETTER THAN US...

THEY COULD PUT IT ALL TOGETHER FASTER THAN YOU THINK.
I WOULDN'T BE SO SURE... THEY HAVE THEIR OWN EXPERTS... AND A FAR SUPERIOR DATA ANALYSIS SYSTEM THAN OURS...
EVEN SO, THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO ABOUT IT... WE CAN'T JUST SINK A SURVEY SHIP BASED ON SUSPICIONS.
IT'S EVEN CONCEIVABLE THAT THE NEWS LEAK WILL BE FROM THEIR SIDE...
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WHAT THE HELL...!?
GO ON HOME, I'LL SEE YOU LATER...
IT'S OKAY, KATAOKA. LET HIM GO...
QUITTING WITHOUT A WORD TO ME... TO ME! AND RUNNING OFF TO ANOTHER FIRM!
DAMN YOU...
LONG TIME NO SEE, YUKI...
STAND UP, YOU BASTARD!

AT FIRST I THOUGHT YOU'D DIED IN THE EARTHQUAKE.
BASTARD! I WOULD'VE BEEN HAPPY WITH JUST ONE WORD FROM YOU!
YOU LEFT YOUR APARTMENT AND VANISHED... NOT A THOUGHT ABOUT YOUR FRIENDS!
BUT I NEVER GOT A LOUSY WORD BACK FROM YOU!
THEN... I FOUND OUT YOU'D LEFT THE FIRM IN SECRET... AND I TRIED TO GET IN TOUCH OVER AND OVER...
I WAS WORRIED SICK... WENT TO KYOTO A FEW TIMES...
ARE YOU GOING TO DIVE IN THE WADA-TSUMI?
FORGIVE ME. I READ ALL YOUR NOTES BUT... I COULDN'T GET IN TOUCH WITH ANYBODY.
I'M SORRY...
IS EVERYBODY OKAY AT THE FIRM?
AND WHEN THEY TOLD ME THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE HAD CHARTERED THE WADATSUMI, I HAD A FEELING YOU'D SHOW UP HERE...
SOMEBODY SAW YOU HANGING OUT IN THE GOVERNMENT DISTRICT...

HOW'S TORU DOING?
...
...HIS CAR WENT OFF THE HIGHWAY DURING THE EARTH-QUAKE...
THE BOSS IS DEAD...
I KNEW YOU WOULD'VE NEVER QUIT UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES.
HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU, SAYS HE WANTS TO SEE YOU...
HE'S FINE...
...
...AND WHEN I SAW YOU JUST NOW I UNDERSTOOD RIGHT AWAY SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED....
I KNEW IT ALL ALONG...
...YOU HAD TO HAVE A VERY GOOD REASON TO VANISH LIKE THAT...
I WAS SURE...
...
WON'T YOU TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED, ONODERA?
REALLY? I CAN'T HAVE POSSIBLY AGED THAT MUCH SINCE THEN.
YOU... YOU LOOK... VERY DIFFERENT.

I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.
I'LL DO IT TOMOR-ROW.
WHAT? HAVE YOU HANDED IN YOUR RESIGNATION?
I WANT TO DIVE IN THE WADATSUMI 2! I'VE DECIDED TO QUIT THE COMPANY TOO.
...IT'S A DEAL.
THANK YOU...
ONE OF US HAS TO BE RIGHT BY THE RADIO ON THE SHIP...
THINK ABOUT IT... NOBODY ELSE CAN OPERATE THE WADATSUMI LIKE THE TWO OF US TOGETHER.
WE'RE A TEAM AGAIN.
ヒュウウ
YOU HAVE CONNEC-TIONS IN VERY ODD PLACES...
MIN-ISTRY OF DE-FENCE ?
...AND ASK FOR MAJOR YAKI. I'LL MAKE SURE HE KNOWS ABOUT YOU.
COME TO THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE TOMOR-ROW.

HACHIJO-JIMA.

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HURRY UP, EVERYBODY!

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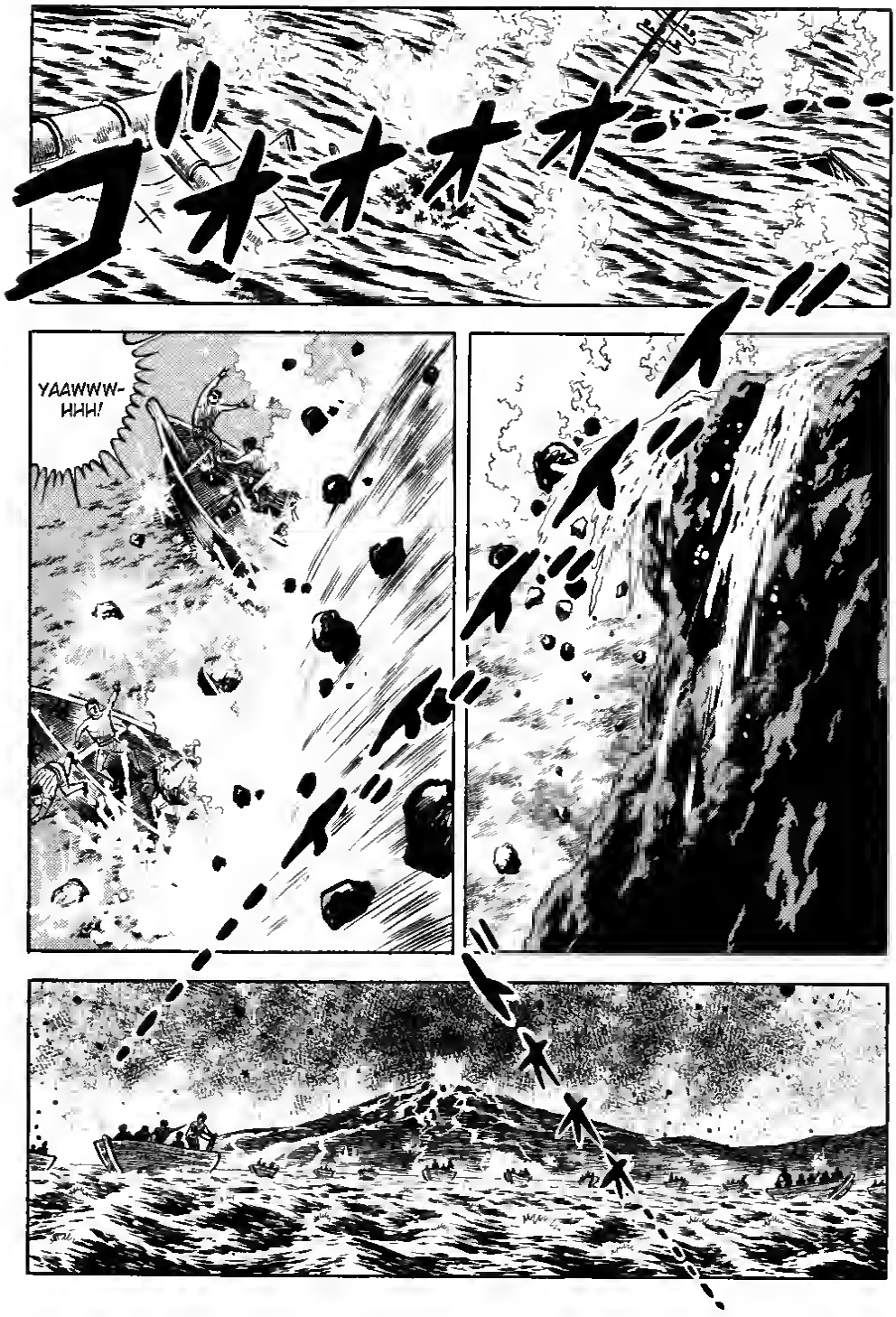
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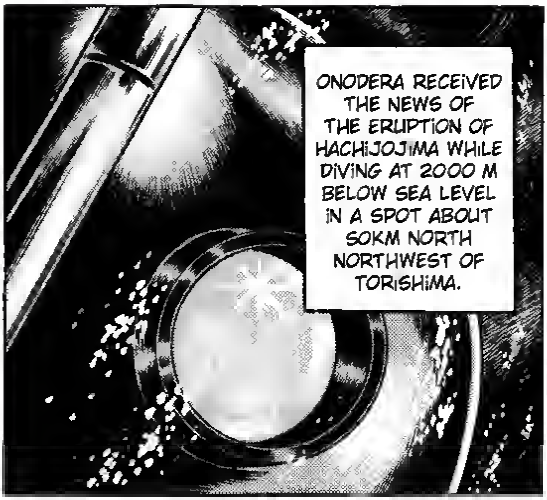
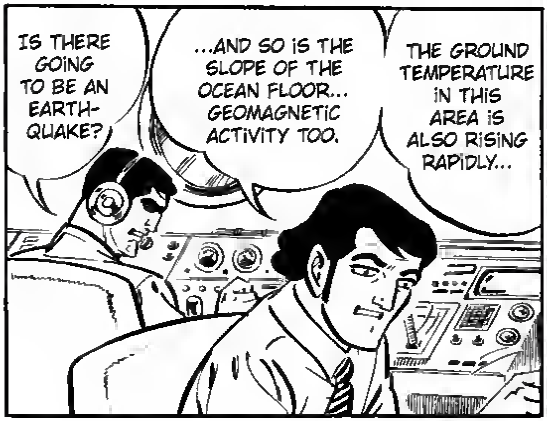
YAAWWW-HHH!


ONODERA RECEIVED THE NEWS OF THE ERUPTION OF HACHIJOJIMA WHILE DIVING AT 2000 M BELOW SEA LEVEL IN A SPOT ABOUT 50KM NORTH NORTHWEST OF TORISHIMA.

MYOJIN REEF, THE BAYONNAISE ROCKS AND SMITH REEF HAVE ALSO ERUPTED... AND AOGASHIMA IS ABOUT TO.
...THEY SAY MT. HACHIJOFUJI HAS ERUPTED.


IS THERE GOING TO BE AN EARTH-QUAKE?
...AND SO IS THE SLOPE OF THE OCEAN FLOOR... GEOMAGNETIC ACTIVITY TOO.
THE GROUND TEMPERATURE IN THIS AREA IS ALSO RISING RAPIDLY...

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I'M ALMOST THERE...
WILL IT TAKE YOU MUCH LONGER TO SET THE AUTOMATED RECORDING DEVICE?
...PORTEND AN UNDERSEA EXPLO-SION.
RATHER THAN AN EARTH-QUAKE, THIS SUDDEN CHANGE MAY...
I'M GOING TO SHOOT AN UNDERWATER FLARE. KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN.
WHAT...?

H-HAVE A LOOK...
DID YOU SEE ANYTHING?
...WILL THE SUB MAKE IT...?
I THINK IT'S STILL OKAY BUT...
IS IT GOING TO... BLOW UP?
EMER-GENCY ASCENT!
KERMADIC, HERE.

HOLD ON TIGHT!
IT' S GOING TO BE A ROCKY RIDE...
WE'RE... TAKING IN WATER!
ONEDERA... WATER!
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WILL WE BE ALL RIGHT, ONODERA?

THE KERMADIC HAS BEEN UNDER A LOT OF STRAIN...
...
DEPTH IS SOO M... WE'LL REACH THE SURFACE IN ABOUT TEN MINUTES...
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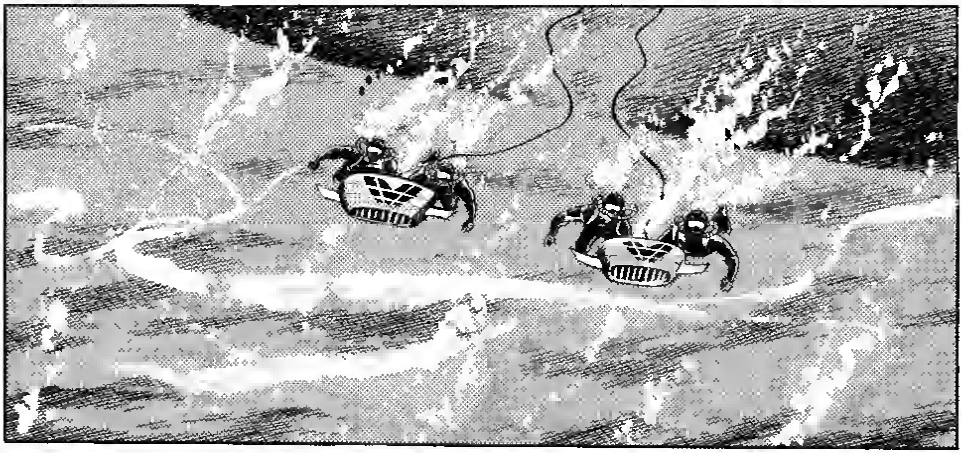
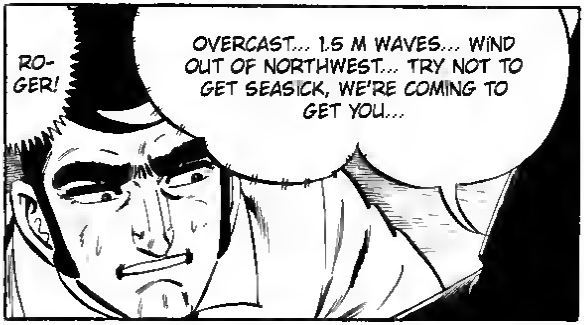
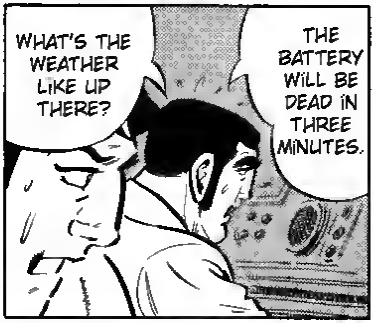
THE KERMADIC IS TAKING IN WATER!
QUICK!




RO-GER!
OVERCAST... 1.5 M WAVES... WIND OUT OF NORTHWEST... TRY NOT TO GET SEASICK, WE'RE COMING TO GET YOU...


WHAT'S THE WEATHER LIKE UP THERE?
THE BATTERY WILL BE DEAD IN THREE MINUTES.

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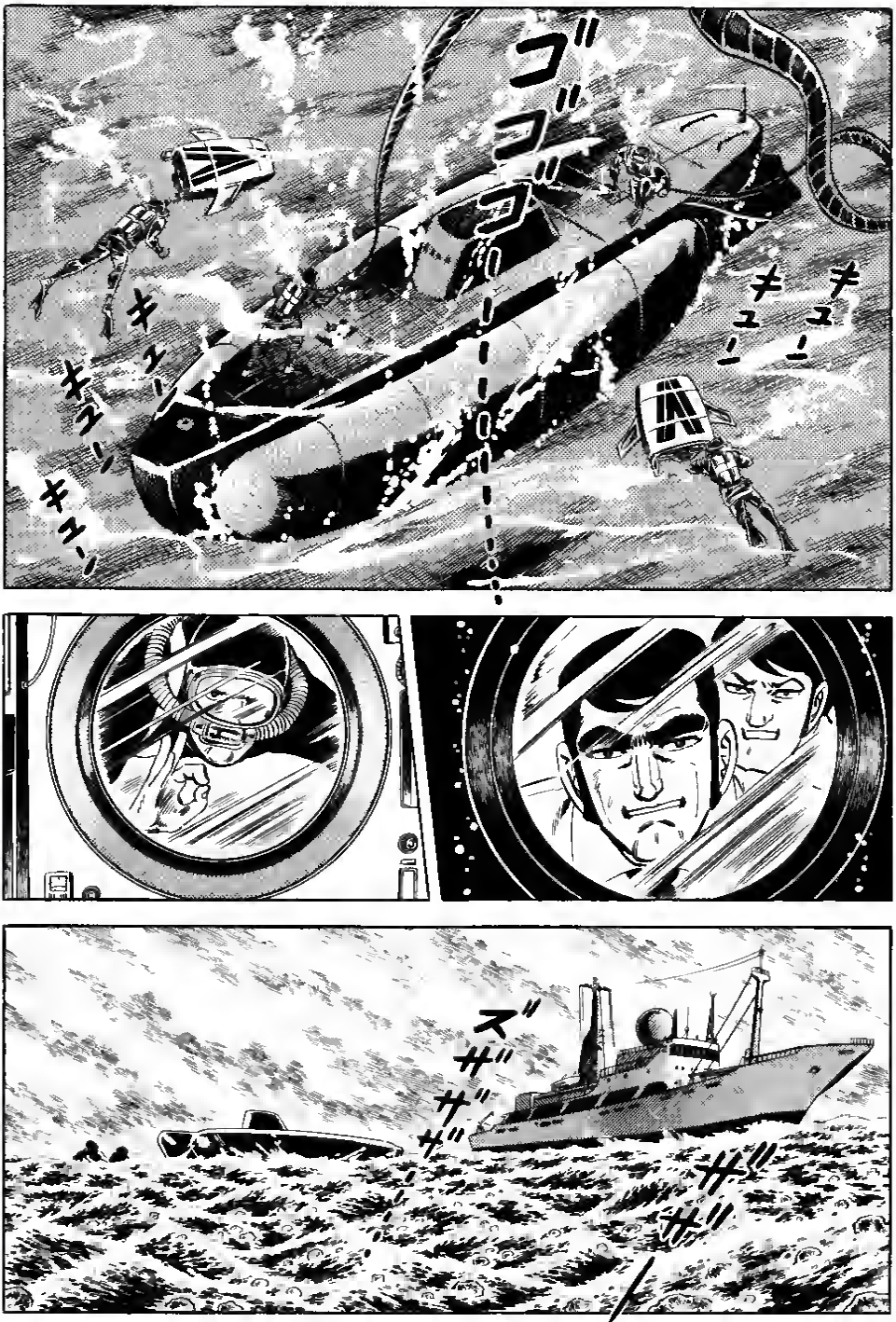
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WE HEARD THAT THE KOSHU SEA MOUNT JUST BLEW UP.
THE SEA IS COVERED WITH PUMICE STONE.
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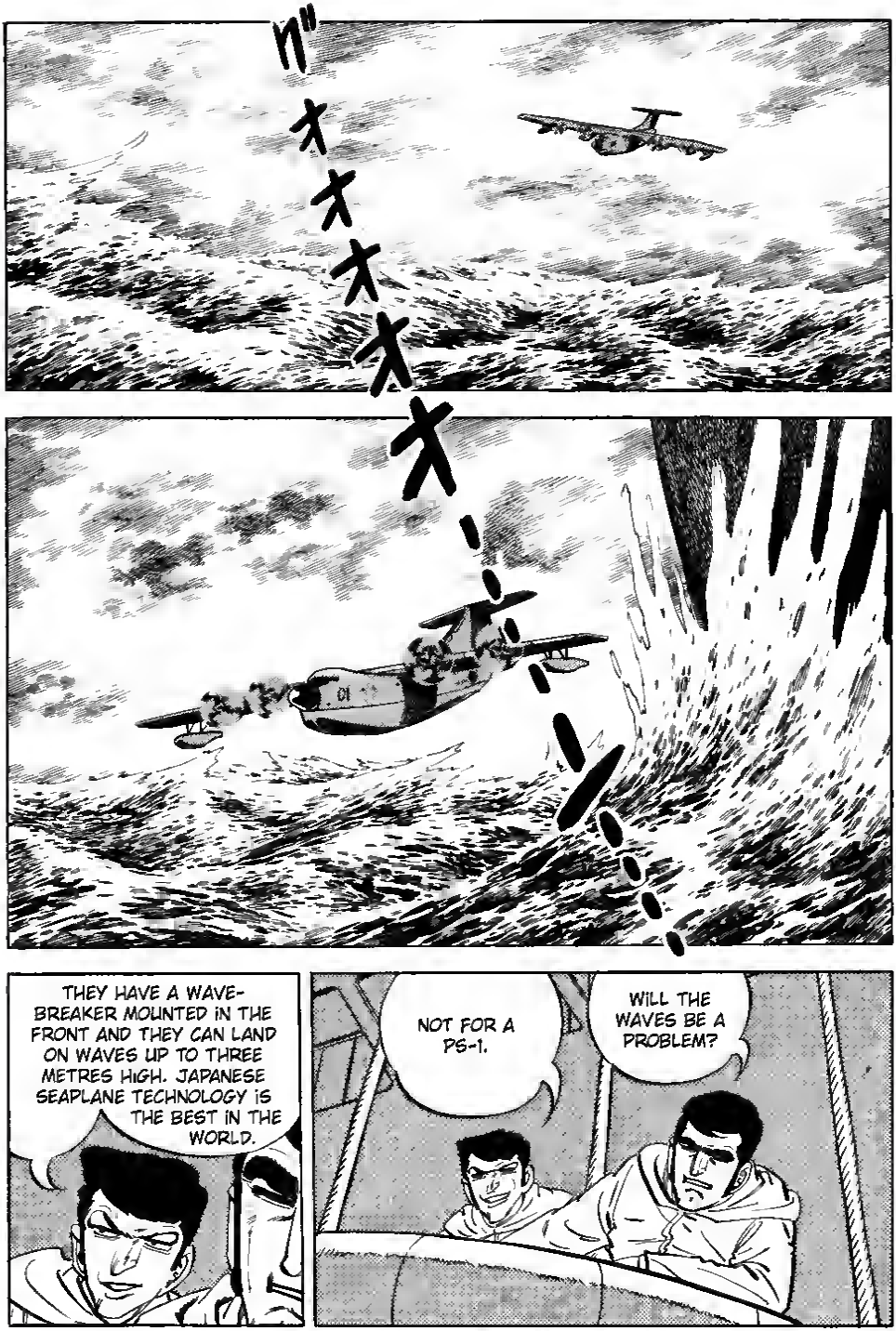
LOOKS LIKE WE'D BETTER GET OUT OF THIS AREA TOO. AND FAST.
SOME FISHING BOATS REPORTED LIGHT DAMAGE.... WHO WOULD EXPECT AN ERUPTION THERE?
WE'LL LEAVE THE AREA AS SOON AS WE HAVE THE KERMADIC ON DECK.
WE'RE KEEPING TRACK OF THE SITUATION ON THE BOTTOM THROUGH THE ECHO SOUNDER...
IT'S VERY DEEP BUT... IT COULD HAVE CONSEQUENCES UP HERE TOO.
...YOU HEARD US ON THE RADIO, RIGHT? THERE ARE SIGNS OF AN UNDERSEA ERUPTION DOWN THERE.
WHAT'S THE SITUATION IN HACHIJOJIMA?

...THE WHOLE ISLAND?
ANOTHER ERUPTION IS EXPECTED SOON, THEY'RE SENDING SELF-DEFENCE FORCE AND PRIVATE SHIPS TO EVACUATE THE ISLAND.
THEY SAY THE ERUPTION OF MT. NISHI KILLED 200 PEOPLE,...
THIS SOUNDS LIKE THE END OF BEAUTIFUL HACHIJOJIMA...
THE SITUATION IS BAD IN THE OTHER IZU ISLANDS TOO, THEY'RE TAKING EVERYONE TO SHIZUOKA...
YES, SCHOOL CHILDREN FIRST... TWELVE THOUSAND PEOPLE IN TOTAL, THEY CAN ONLY TAKE THE CLOTHES THEY'RE WEARING.
...SOMEONE NAMED KATAOKA IS ON THE PLANE AND WANTS YOU TO GO BACK WITH THEM...
ONODERA...
...THEY SAY THEY'LL BE LANDING NEXT TO US TO PICK UP THE SURVEY DATA.
A MARITIME SELF-DEFENCE FORCE'S SEAPLANE HAS ARRIVED IN THE AREA...
KATAOKA...?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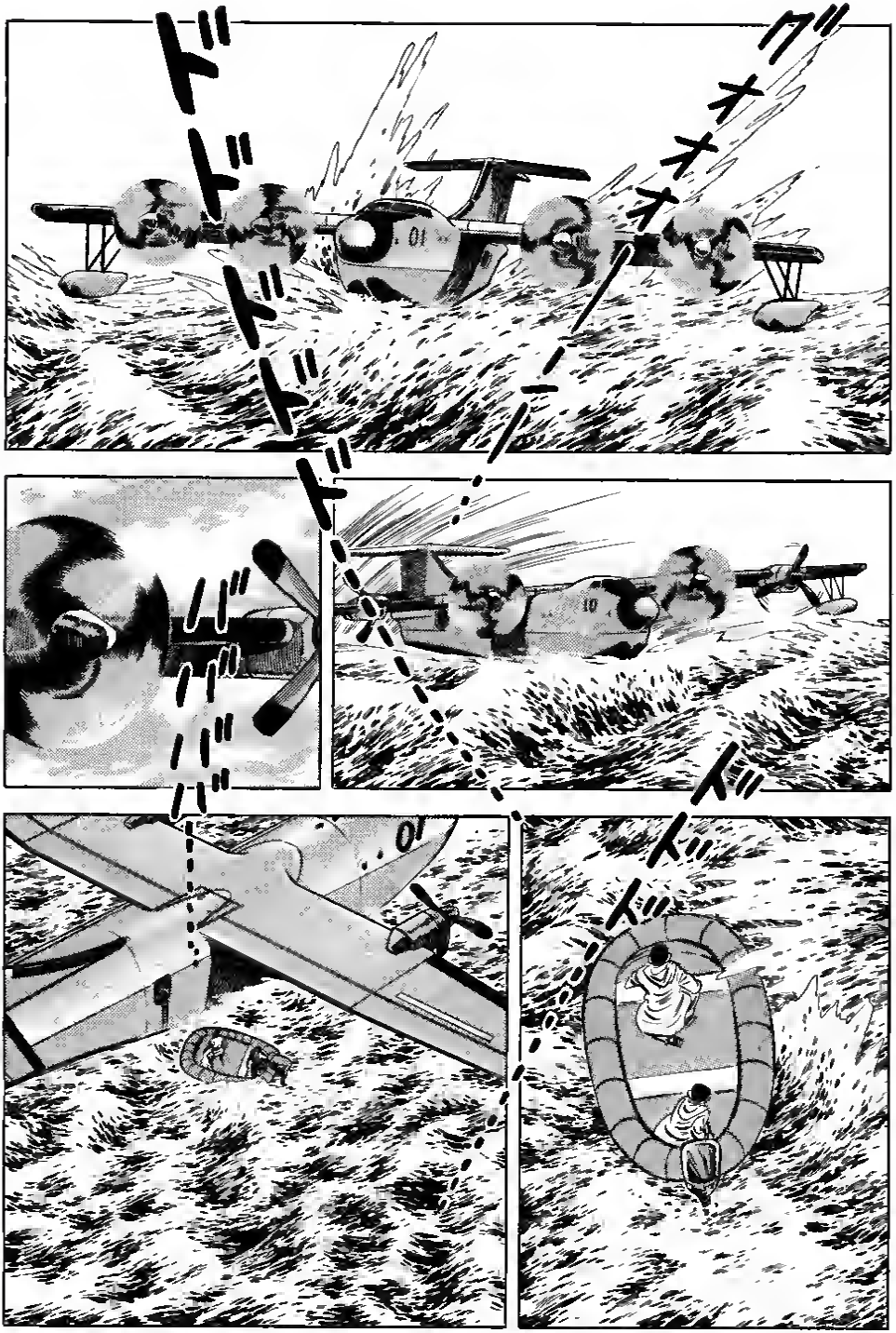
THEY HAVE A WAVE-BREAKER MOUNTED IN THE FRONT AND THEY CAN LAND ON WAVES UP TO THREE METRES HIGH. JAPANESE SEAPLANE TECHNOLOGY IS THE BEST IN THE WORLD.
NOT FOR A PS-1.
WILL THE WAVES BE A PROBLEM?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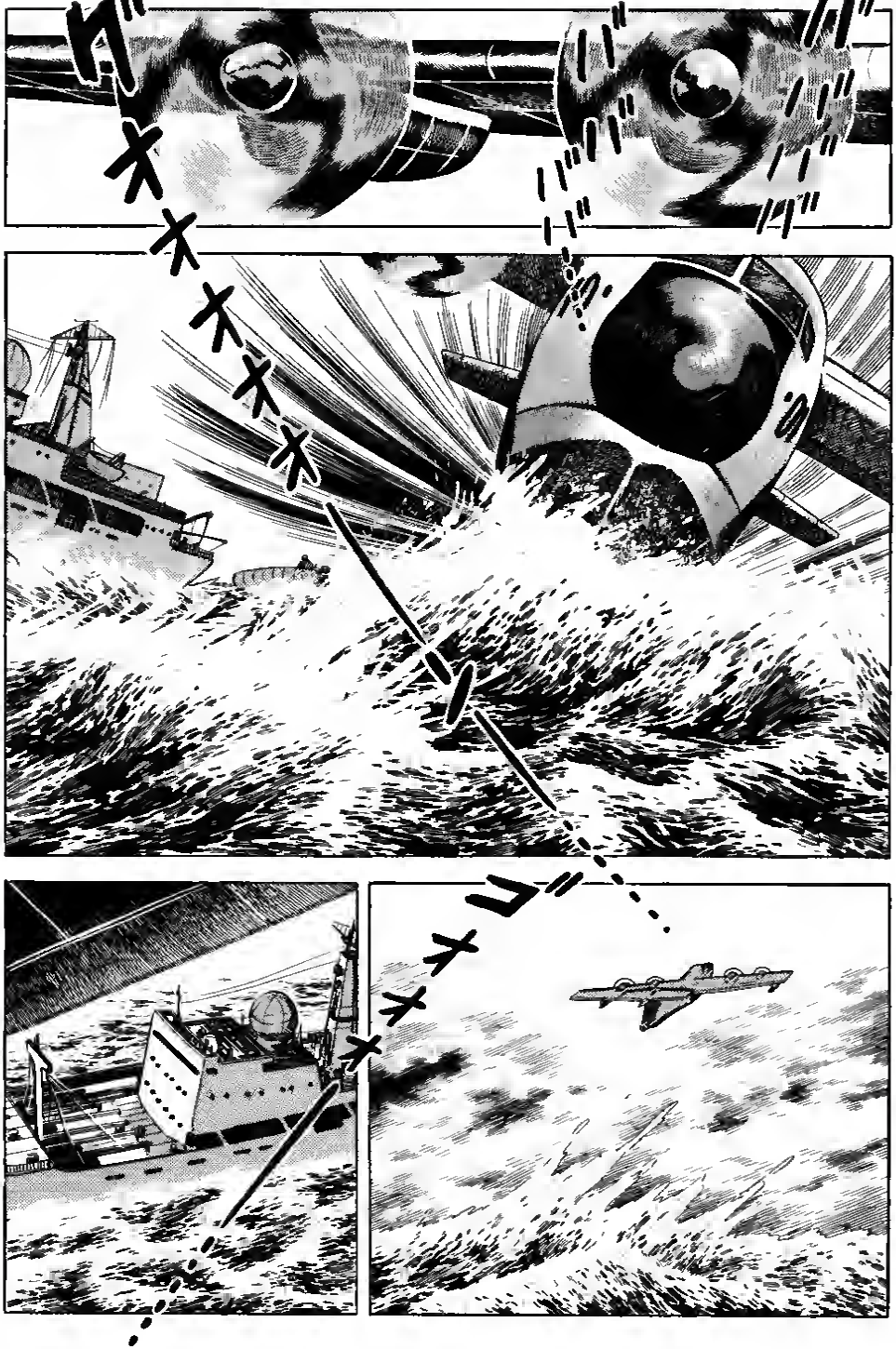
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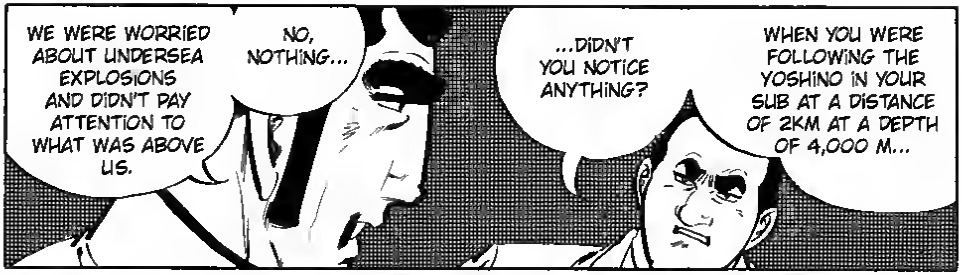
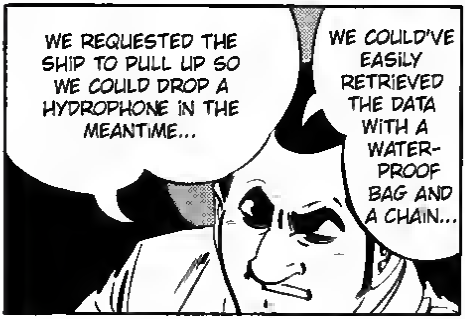
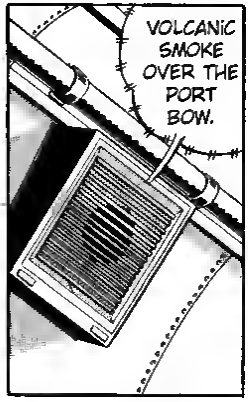
HELLO!
?
COULD IT BE FOLLOWING THE YOSHINO? IT'S 800 METRES AWAY FROM IT... VERY CLOSE.
FOUR THOUSAND TON...? PROBABLY A NUCLEAR SUBMARINE, THEN.
...IT'S A BIG SUB, IN THE FOUR THOUSAND-TON CLASS... MAYBE BIGGER...
I WAS RIGHT, AFTER ALL...
WHAT'S IT DOING HERE?
BESIDES, IT'S NOT THAT BIG, IT'S ONLY 1,850 TONS.
...THE UZUSHIO? IT'S IN THE KII PENIN-SULA AT THE MO-MENT...
I HEARD IT'S WORKING FOR PLAN D NOW...
A SUBMARINE? THE UZUSHIO, MAYBE?
IT WOULD SEEM SOME FOREIGN COUNTRY HAS TAKEN AN INTEREST IN US...
TELL THEM TO USE ONLY THE PASSIVE SONAR FROM NOW ON.
IT'S A POSSIBILITY... YOU SHOULD INFORM THE YOSHINO IN CODE.
IS IT SPYING ON US?

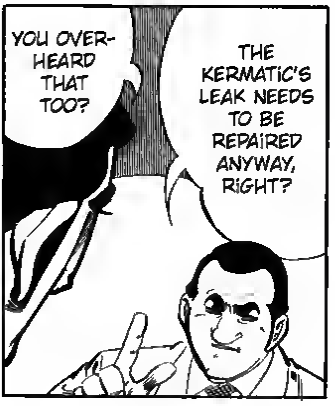

WHEN YOU WERE FOLLOWING THE YOSHINO IN YOUR SUB AT A DISTANCE OF 2KM AT A DEPTH OF 4,000 M...
...DIDN'T YOU NOTICE ANYTHING?
NO, NOTHING...
WE WERE WORRIED ABOUT UNDERSEA EXPLOSIONS AND DIDN'T PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT WAS ABOVE US.

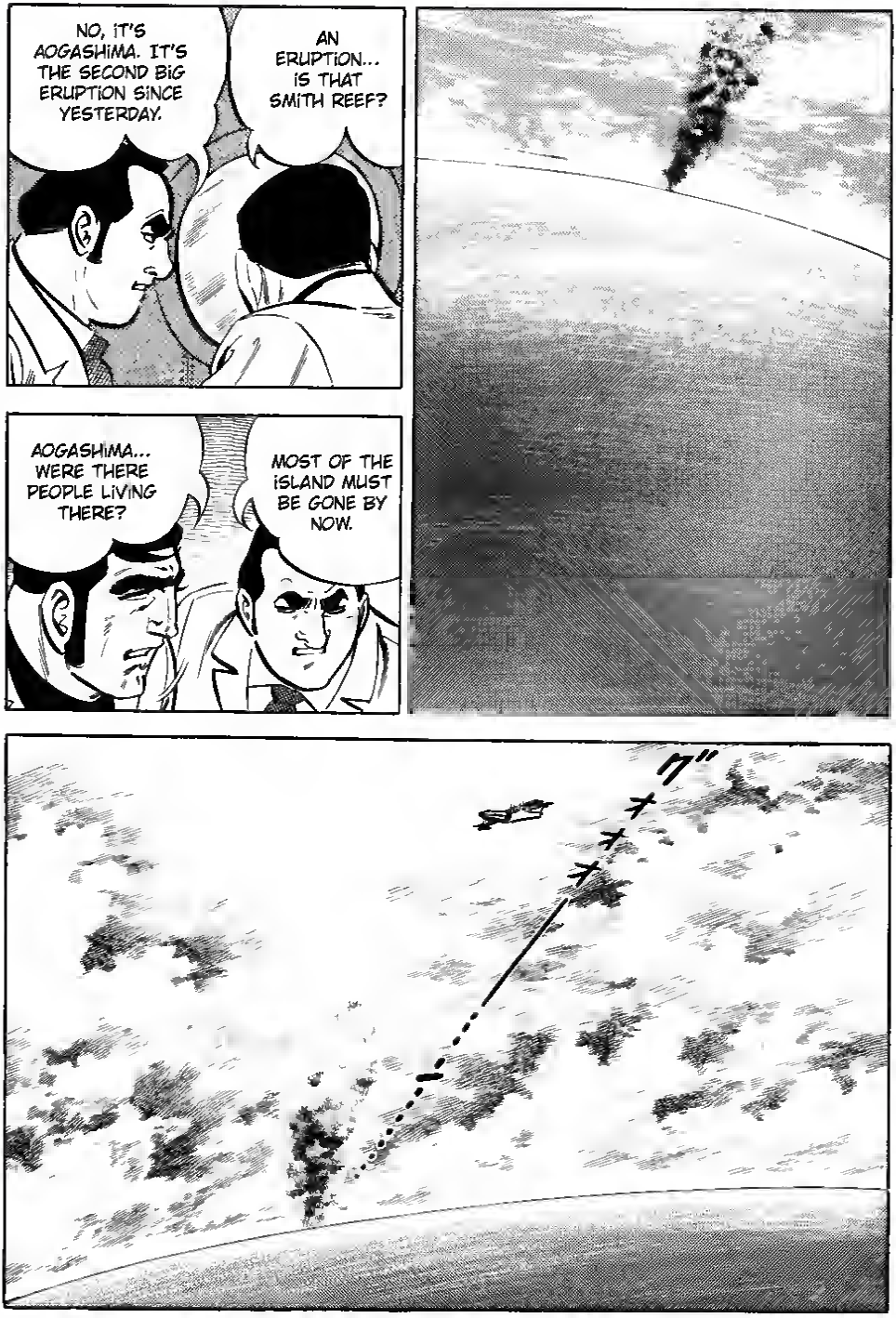

WE COULD'VE EASILY RETRIEVED THE DATA WITH A WATER-PROOF BAG AND A CHAIN...
WE REQUESTED THE SHIP TO PULL UP SO WE COULD DROP A HYDROPHONE IN THE MEANTIME...

THE MAD (MAGNETIC ANOMALY DETECTOR) SENSOR'S NEEDLE WAS MOVING LIKE CRAZY..
I ASKED YOU TO COME ON BOARD SO WE COULD HAVE AN EXCUSE TO LAND.

YOU MEAN... I WAS ONLY A... DECOY?
NOT JUST THAT, OF COURSE. WE ALSO WANT YOU TO TAKE PART IN TONIGHT'S EMERGENCY MEETING AT HQ.


VOLCANIC SMOKE OVER THE PORT BOW.


THE KERMATIC'S LEAK NEEDS TO BE REPAIRED ANYWAY, RIGHT?
YOU OVER-HEARD THAT TOO?


NO, IT'S AOGASHIMA. IT'S THE SECOND BIG ERUPTION SINCE YESTERDAY.
AN ERUPTION... IS THAT SMITH REEF?
AOGASHIMA... WERE THERE PEOPLE LIVING THERE?
MOST OF THE ISLAND MUST BE GONE BY NOW.
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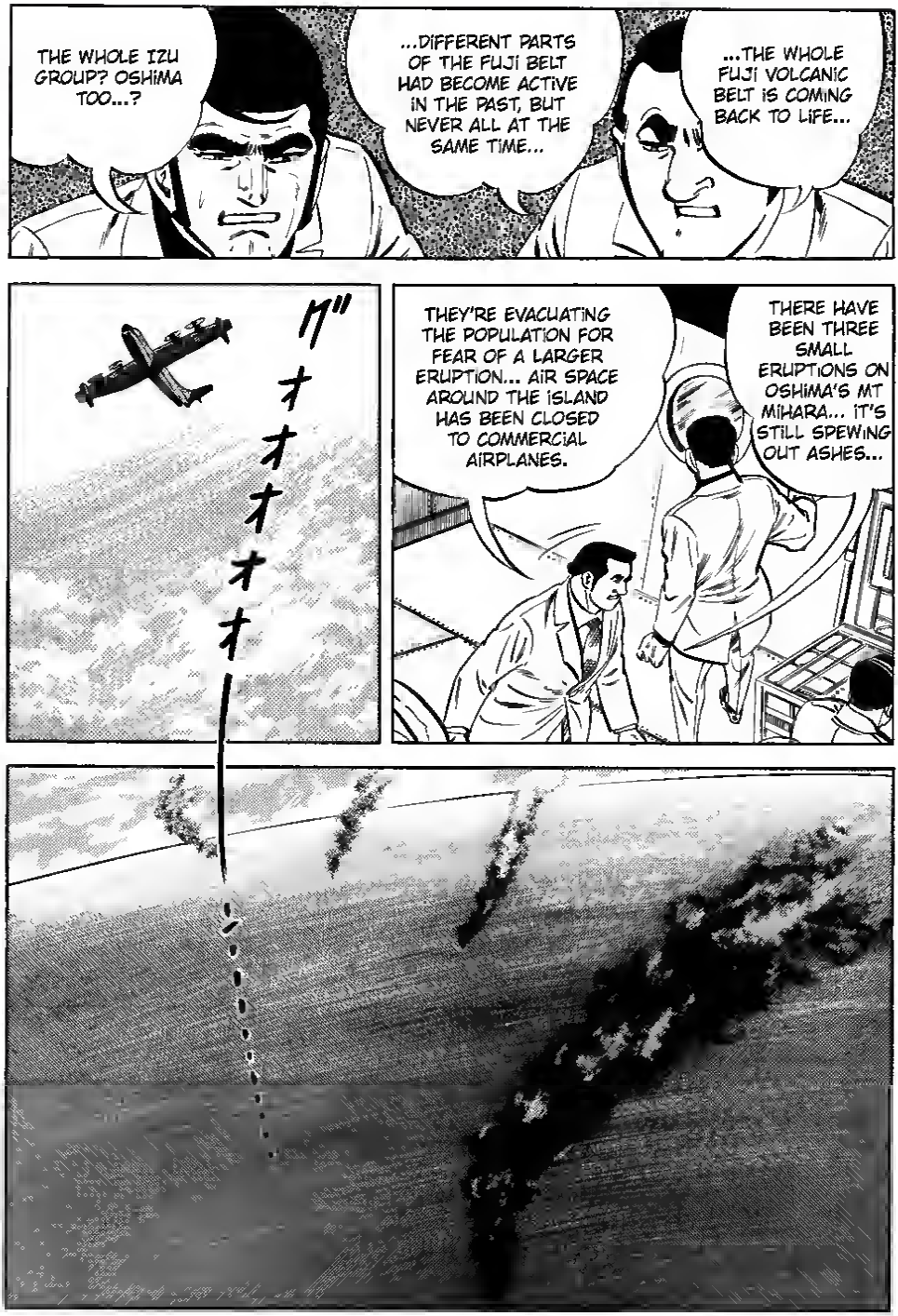
THE FIRST ERUPTION OCCURRED ONLY TEN MINUTES AFTER THE ISLAND HAD REPORTED SIGNS OF VOLCANIC ACTIVITY...
WHAT... THEY LET THEM DIE?
THERE WERE ALMOST NO SHIPS IN THE VICINITY...
ABOUT 270... MOST OF THEM DIED, I GUESS...
...IN THE FUTURE... THE SAME THING IS GOING TO HAPPEN OVER AND OVER...
...
YOU SEE, UNLIKE HACHIJOJIMA, AOGASHIMA WAS VERY OUT OF THE WAY...
...AND THE MESSAGE WAS PICKED UP BY AN INTERNATIONAL PASSENGER PLANE.
...MILLIONS OF TIMES... BIGGER...
...ON A SCALE THOUSANDS OF TIMES...
AND FURTHER TO THE NORTH, THAT'S MIYAKE-JIMA.
LOOK, YOU CAN SEE THE SMOKE FROM HACHIJOJIMA.


THE WHOLE IZU GROUP? OSHIMA TOO...?
...DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE FUJI BELT HAD BECOME ACTIVE IN THE PAST, BUT NEVER ALL AT THE SAME TIME...
...THE WHOLE FUJI VOLCANIC BELT IS COMING BACK TO LIFE...
グオオオオオー
THEY'RE EVACUATING THE POPULATION FOR FEAR OF A LARGER ERUPTION... AIR SPACE AROUND THE ISLAND HAS BEEN CLOSED TO COMMERCIAL AIRPLANES.
THERE HAVE BEEN THREE SMALL ERUPTIONS ON OSHIMA'S MT MIHARA... IT'S STILL SPEWING OUT ASHES...

Japan sinks (2)
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